Translation of the *Seventh Letter*

Πλάτων τοῖς Δίωνος οἰκείοις τε καὶ ἑταίροις εὖ πράττειν.[1]

ἐπεστείλατέ μοι νομίζειν δεῖν τὴν διάνοιαν ὑμῶν εἶναι τὴν αὐτὴν ἣν εἶχεν καὶ Δίων, καὶ δὴ καὶ κοινωνεῖν διεκελεύεσθέ [**324a**] μοι, καθ' ὅσον οἷός τέ εἰμὶ ἔργῳ καὶ λόγῳ. ἐγὼ δέ, εἰ μὲν δόξαν καὶ ἐπιθυμίαν τὴν αὐτὴν ἔχετε ἐκείνῳ, ξύμφημι κοινωνήσειν, εἰ δὲ μή, βουλεύσεσθαι πολλάκις. τίς δ' ἦν ἡ ἐκείνου διάνοια καὶ ἐπιθυμία, σχεδὸν οὐκ εἰκάζων ἀλλ' ὡς εἰδὼς σαφῶς εἴποιμ' ἄν. ὅτε γὰρ κατ' ἀρχὰς εἰς Συρακούσας ἐγὼ ἀφικόμην, σχεδὸν ἔτη τετταράκοντα γεγονώς, Δίων εἶχε τὴν ἡλικίαν ἣν τὰ νῦν Ἱππαρῖνος γέγονε, καὶ ἣν ἔσχε [**324b**] τότε δόξαν, ταύτην καὶ διετέλεσεν ἔχων, Συρακοσίους οἴεσθαι δεῖν ἐλευθέρους εἶναι, κατὰ νόμους τοὺς ἀρίστους οἰκοῦντας· ὥστε οὐδὲν θαυμαστὸν εἴ τις θεῶν καὶ τοῦτον εἰς τὴν αὐτὴν δόξαν περὶ πολιτείας ἐκείνῳ γενέσθαι σύμφρονα ποιήσειε.

τίς δ' ἦν ὁ τρόπος τῆς γενέσεως αὐτῆς, οὐκ ἀπάξιον ἀκοῦσαι νέῳ καὶ μὴ νέῳ, πειράσομαι δὲ ἐξ ἀρχῆς αὐτὴν ἐγὼ πρὸς ὑμᾶς διεξελθεῖν· ἔχει γὰρ καιρὸν τὰ νῦν. νέος ἐγώ ποτε ὢν πολλοῖς δὴ ταὐτὸν ἔπαθον· ᾠήθην, εἰ θᾶττον ἐμαυτοῦ γενοίμην κύριος, ἐπὶ τὰ κοινὰ τῆς πόλεως [**324c**] εὐθὺς ἰέναι. καί μοι τύχαι τινὲς τῶν τῆς πόλεως πραγμάτων τοιαίδε παρέπεσον. ὑπὸ πολλῶν γὰρ τῆς τότε πολιτείας λοιδορουμένης μεταβολὴ γίγνεται, καὶ τῆς μεταβολῆς εἷς καὶ πεντήκοντά τινες ἄνδρες προὔστησαν ἄρχοντες, ἕνδεκα μὲν ἐν ἄστει, δέκα δ' ἐν Πειραιεῖ, περί τε ἀγορὰν ἑκάτεροι τούτων ὅσα τ' ἐν τοῖς ἄστεσι διοικεῖν ἔδει, τριάκοντα δὲ πάντων [**324d**] ἄρχοντες κατέστησαν αὐτοκράτορες. τούτων δή τινες οἰκεῖοί τε ὄντες καὶ γνώριμοι ἐτύγχανον ἐμοί, καὶ δὴ καὶ παρεκάλουν εὐθὺς ὡς ἐπὶ προσήκοντα πράγματά με. καὶ ἐγὼ θαυμαστὸν οὐδὲν ἔπαθον ὑπὸ νεότητος· ᾠήθην γὰρ αὐτοὺς ἔκ τινος ἀδίκου βίου ἐπὶ δίκαιον τρόπον ἄγοντας διοικήσειν δὴ τὴν πόλιν, ὥστε αὐτοῖς σφόδρα προσεῖχον τὸν νοῦν, τί πράξοιεν.

[1] With the exception of the occasional paragraph break, or where otherwise noted, the Greek text printed is that which can be found in the most recent Loeb edition. i.e. Henderson ed., *Plato IX: Timaeus, Critias, Cleitophon, Menexenus, Epistles* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014).

Plato sends his best to the friends and companions of Dion

You have written to say that I should consider your intentions to be the same as Dion's, and in fact you have insisted that I stand with you [**324a**], to the extent that I am able, with both my words and actions. For my part, if indeed you do have the same opinions and motivations as Dion, I will agree to stand with you, but if you do not, I will have to consider the matter at length. Now, concerning Dion's intentions and motivations, I can speak not through conjecture but as one who knows the matter well. For when I first arrived in Syracuse at about the age of forty, Dion was the same age as Hipparinos is now, and he held [**324b**] then the same opinion that he maintained till the very end, namely that the Syracusans ought to be free and to live in accordance with the best of laws. So it would not be at all surprising if one of the gods were to make Hipparinos hold the same views on politics and feel the same way as Dion.

It is, however, worthwhile for young and old alike to hear how all this began, so I will try to go over it from the beginning for you, since the present circumstances call for it. When I was a young man, I felt the same way that many others surely do: I believed that as soon as I became master of my destiny, I would get involved in the politics of the city. [**324c**] Unfortunately for me, the city suffered the following fate: a revolution occurred, since the government at the time was much maligned, and fifty-one men emerged as leaders of this revolution: eleven in the city and ten in the Piraeus, with each of these regulating the business of the marketplace and whatever needed managing in the urban areas; and thirty men [**324d**] who were put in charge and given full authority over everything. Now, some of these men happened to be relations and acquaintances of mine, and, more to the point, they immediately recruited me, as if these matters concerned me. Given my youth, my feelings were not surprising, for I believed that they were going to govern the city by leading it out of a sort of unjust existence into a just one, so I eagerly turned my attention to them and to what they were doing.

καὶ ἑώρων δή που τοὺς ἄνδρας ἐν χρόνῳ ὀλίγῳ χρυσῆν ἀποδείξαντας τὴν ἔμπροσθεν πολιτείαν, τά τε ἄλλα καὶ φίλον [**324e**] ἄνδρα ἐμοὶ πρεσβύτερον Σωκράτη, ὃν ἐγὼ σχεδὸν οὐκ ἂν αἰσχυνοίμην εἰπὼν δικαιότατον εἶναι τῶν τότε, ἐπί τινα τῶν πολιτῶν μεθ' ἑτέρων ἔπεμπον, βίᾳ ἄξοντα ὡς ἀποθανούμενον, [**325a**] ἵνα δὴ μετέχοι τῶν πραγμάτων αὐτοῖς, εἴτε βούλοιτο εἴτε μή· ὁ δ' οὐκ ἐπείθετο, πᾶν δὲ παρεκινδύνευσε παθεῖν πρὶν ἀνοσίων αὐτοῖς ἔργων γενέσθαι κοινωνός· ἃ δὴ πάντα καθορῶν καὶ εἴ τιν' ἄλλα τοιαῦτα οὐ σμικρά, ἐδυσχέρανά τε καὶ ἐμαυτὸν ἐπανήγαγον ἀπὸ τῶν τότε κακῶν.

χρόνῳ δὲ οὐ πολλῷ μετέπεσε τὰ τῶν τριάκοντά τε καὶ πᾶσα ἡ τότε πολιτεία. πάλιν δὲ βραδύτερον μέν, εἶλκε δέ με ὅμως ἡ [**325b**] περὶ τὸ πράττειν τὰ κοινὰ καὶ πολιτικὰ ἐπιθυμία. ἦν οὖν καὶ ἐν ἐκείνοις, ἅτε τεταραγμένοις, πολλὰ γιγνόμενα ἅ τις ἂν δυσχεράνειε, καὶ οὐδέν τι θαυμαστὸν ἦν τιμωρίας ἐχθρῶν γίγνεσθαί τινών τισι μείζους ἐν μεταβολαῖς· καί τοι πολλῇ γε ἐχρήσαντο οἱ τότε κατελθόντες ἐπιεικείᾳ.

κατὰ δέ τινα τύχην αὖ τὸν ἑταῖρον ἡμῶν Σωκράτη τοῦτον δυναστεύοντές τινες εἰσάγουσιν εἰς δικαστήριον, ἀνοσιωτάτην αἰτίαν ἐπιβαλλόντες [**325c**] καὶ πάντων ἥκιστα Σωκράτει προσήκουσαν· ὡς ἀσεβῆ γὰρ οἱ μὲν εἰσήγαγον, οἱ δὲ κατεψηφίσαντο καὶ ἀπέκτειναν τὸν τότε τῆς ἀνοσίου ἀγωγῆς οὐκ ἐθελήσαντα μετασχεῖν περὶ ἕνα τῶν τότε φευγόντων φίλων, ὅτε φεύγοντες ἐδυστύχουν αὐτοί.

σκοποῦντι δή μοι ταῦτά τε καὶ τοὺς ἀνθρώπους τοὺς πράττοντας τὰ πολιτικά, καὶ τοὺς νόμους γε καὶ ἔθη, ὅσῳ μᾶλλον διεσκόπουν ἡλικίας τε εἰς τὸ πρόσθε προὔβαινον, τοσούτῳ χαλεπώτερον ἐφαίνετο ὀρθῶς εἶναί μοι τὰ πολιτικὰ [**325d**] διοικεῖν· οὔτε γὰρ ἄνευ φίλων ἀνδρῶν καὶ ἑταίρων πιστῶν οἷόν τ' εἶναι πράττειν,—οὓς οὔθ' ὑπάρχοντας ἦν εὑρεῖν εὐπετές, οὐ γὰρ ἔτι ἐν τοῖς τῶν πατέρων ἤθεσι καὶ ἐπιτηδεύμασιν ἡ πόλις ἡμῶν διῳκεῖτο, καινούς τε ἄλλους ἀδύνατον ἦν κτᾶσθαι μετά τινος ῥᾳστώνης.

As it happened, I soon saw them making the former government look like gold. Among other things, they took [**324e**] my old friend Socrates, who I would not be ashamed to say was practically the most just of all men at that time, and they sent him off, along with other men, to drag another citizen off to his death [**325a**] so that Socrates might be an accomplice to their crimes, whether he wanted to or not. He, however, did not obey, choosing instead to run the risk of facing any punishment whatsoever rather than be associated with their unholy enterprises. When I saw all of this, and some other similarly nasty things, I was appalled, and I extracted myself from that awful business.

Not long afterwards, the regime of the Thirty and the entire government collapsed, and before I knew it, the desire to engage [**325b**] with public and political matters began to lure me in again. To be sure, in that period of chaos many things were happening that one might find appalling, and it is not at all surprising that in these revolutionary times, certain people were exacting excessive vengeance against their enemies. Still, those who had returned to the city acted with great prudence.

As chance would have it though, certain individuals in power brought my friend Socrates to trial, laying on him a charge that was of the utmost sacrilege, [**325c**] and which he deserved least of all men. Indeed, they charged Socrates with impiety, while others condemned and killed him – the same man who had previously refused to take part in the unholy arrest of a friend of the very men who were unfortunate enough to be in exile at that time.

As I considered these things – both the laws and customs and the men who were engaged in politics – the more that I assessed the situation and advanced into adulthood, the more it seemed to me to be difficult to engage in politics in a reasonable manner. [**325d**] For one cannot do anything without trusted friends or associates, and it was hard to find such individuals around in those days, since our city was not being governed in accordance with the customs and manners of our forefathers, and it was also impossible to acquire new ones with any ease.

τά τε τῶν νόμων γράμματα καὶ ἔθη διεφθείρετο καὶ ἐπεδίδου θαυμαστὸν ὅσον, ὥστε με, [**325e**] τὸ πρῶτον πολλῆς μεστὸν ὄντα ὁρμῆς ἐπὶ τὸ πράττειν τὰ κοινά,βλέποντα εἰς ταῦτα καὶ φερόμενα ὁρῶντα πάντη πάντως, τελευτῶντα ἰλιγγιᾶν, καὶ τοῦ μὲν σκοπεῖν μὴ ἀποστῆναι πῇ ποτὲ ἄμεινον ἂν γίγνοιτο περί τε αὐτὰ ταῦτα καὶ [**326a**] δὴ καὶ περὶ τὴν πᾶσαν πολιτείαν, τοῦ δὲ πράττειν αὖ περιμένειν ἀεὶ καιρούς, τελευτῶντα δὲ νοῆσαι περὶ πασῶν τῶν νῦν πόλεων ὅτι κακῶς ξύμπασαι πολιτεύονται· τὰ γὰρ τῶν νόμων αὐταῖς σχεδὸν ἀνιάτως ἔχοντά ἐστιν ἄνευ παρασκευῆς θαυμαστῆς τινὸς μετὰ τύχης· λέγειν τε ἠναγκάσθην, ἐπαινῶν τὴν ὀρθὴν φιλοσοφίαν, ὡς ἐκ ταύτης ἔστι τά τε πολιτικὰ δίκαια καὶ τὰ τῶν ἰδιωτῶν πάντα κατιδεῖν· κακῶν οὖν οὐ [**326b**] λήξειν τὰ ἀνθρώπινα γένη, πρὶν ἂν ἢ τὸ τῶν φιλοσοφούντων ὀρθῶς γε καὶ ἀληθῶς γένος εἰς ἀρχὰς ἔλθῃ τὰς πολιτικὰς ἢ τὸ τῶν δυναστευόντων ἐν ταῖς πόλεσιν ἔκ τινος μοίρας θείας ὄντως φιλοσοφήσῃ.

ταύτην δὴ τὴν διάνοιαν ἔχων εἰς Ἰταλίαν τε καὶ Σικελίαν ἦλθον, ὅτε πρῶτον ἀφικόμην. ἐλθόντα δέ με ὁ ταύτῃ λεγόμενος αὖ βίος εὐδαίμων, Ἰταλιωτικῶν τε καὶ Συρακουσίων τραπεζῶν πλήρης, οὐδαμῇ οὐδαμῶς ἤρεσε, δίς τε τῆς ἡμέρας ἐμπιμπλάμενον ζῆν καὶ μηδέποτε κοιμώμενον μόνον νύκτωρ, [**326c**] καὶ ὅσα τούτῳ ἐπιτηδεύματα συνέπεται τῷ βίῳ· ἐκ γὰρ τούτων τῶν ἐθῶν οὔτ' ἂν φρόνιμος οὐδείς ποτε γενέσθαι τῶν ὑπὸ τὸν οὐρανὸν ἀνθρώπων ἐκ νέου ἐπιτηδεύων δύναιτο,—οὐχ οὕτω θαυμαστῇ φύσει κραθήσεται,—σώφρων δὲ οὐδ' ἂν μελλήσαι ποτὲ γενέσθαι, καὶ δὴ καὶ περὶ τῆς ἄλλης ἀρετῆς ὁ αὐτὸς λόγος ἂν εἴη. πόλις τε οὐδεμία ἂν ἠρεμήσαι κατὰ νόμους οὐδ' οὑστινασοῦν ἀνδρῶν οἰομένων ἀναλίσκειν μὲν δεῖν [**326d**] πάντα ἐς ὑπερβολάς, ἀργῶν δὲ εἰς ἅπαντα ἡγουμένων αὖ δεῖν γίγνεσθαι πλὴν εἰς εὐωχίας καὶ πότους καὶ ἀφροδισίων σπουδὰς διαπονουμένας· ἀναγκαῖον δὲ εἶναι ταύτας τὰς πόλεις εἰς τυραννίδας τε καὶ ὀλιγαρχίας καὶ δημοκρατίας μεταβαλλούσας μηδέποτε λήγειν, δικαίου δὲ καὶ ἰσονόμου πολιτείας τοὺς ἐν αὐταῖς δυναστεύοντας μηδ' ὄνομα ἀκούοντας ἀνέχεσθαι.

Meanwhile, our customs and written laws were both in the process of being corrupted, and this had progressed to such a remarkable degree that, [**325e**] even though I had first been moved by a strong impulse to take part in public affairs, as I watched and saw everything always being pulled this way and that, I wound up with my head spinning. Nevertheless, I did not shy away from considering how there might be some improvement in these matters, [**326a**] and indeed in the entire government, and I remained ever vigilant for an opportune moment to act. Ultimately, however, I came to this conclusion about the cities of our time: they are all governed poorly, for without some sort of incredible intervention and a certain amount of luck, their laws are basically unsalvageable. And I was forced to say, in praise of the true love of wisdom, that it is through this that it is possible to understand all things just, both in politics and in the private sphere. As a result, humanity will not desist [**326b**] from evil until either those who truly and properly pursue philosophy come into power, or those who hold power in our cities, by some sort of divine fate, actually pursue philosophy.

I still maintained this line of thought when I first arrived in Italy and Sicily. And upon my arrival I was not at all pleased with what the Italians and Sicilians call the blessed life, one laden with feasts, spent stuffing oneself twice a day, never going to bed alone at night, [**326c**] and all the other things that go hand-in-hand with this lifestyle. With such habits, nobody under the sun who had followed this path since childhood could ever develop any sense – no one is tempered by so admirable a nature – nor would anyone ever be likely to become moderate. Of course, the same reasoning would apply to every other kind of virtue, and no city would find peace under laws of any kind, as long as men thought it necessary to squander everything to the extreme, and believed that they should [**326d**] be lazy about everything except feasting, drinking, and the avid pursuit of sexual pleasure. On the contrary, it is inevitable that such cities constantly rotate between tyranny, oligarchy, and democracy, and that those ruling such cities are unable to bear the very mention of a just government based on equality under the law.

ταῦτα δὴ πρὸς τοῖς πρόσθε διανοούμενος εἰς Συρακούσας [**326e**] διεπορεύθην, ἴσως μὲν κατὰ τύχην, ἔοικε μὴν τότε μηχανωμένῳ τινὶ τῶν κρειττόνων ἀρχὴν βαλέσθαι τῶν νῦν γεγονότων πραγμάτων περὶ Δίωνα καὶ τῶν περὶ Συρακούσας· δέος δὲ μὴ καὶ πλειόνων ἔτι, ἐὰν μὴ νῦν ὑμεῖς ἐμοὶ πείθησθε τὸ δεύτερον συμβουλεύοντι.

πῶς οὖν δὴ λέγω πάντων [**327a**] ἀρχὴν γεγονέναι τὴν τότε εἰς Σικελίαν ἐμὴν ἄφιξιν; ἐγὼ συγγενόμενος Δίωνι τότε νέῳ κινδυνεύω, τὰ δοκοῦντα ἐμοὶ βέλτιστα ἀνθρώποις εἶναι μηνύων διὰ λόγων καὶ πράττειν αὐτὰ ξυμβουλεύων, ἀγνοεῖν ὅτι τυραννίδος τινὰ τρόπον κατάλυσιν ἐσομένην μηχανώμενος ἐλάνθανον ἐμαυτόν. Δίων μὲν γὰρ δὴ μάλ' εὐμαθὴς ὢν πρός τε τἆλλα καὶ πρὸς τοὺς τότε ὑπ' ἐμοῦ λόγους λεγομένους οὕτως ὀξέως ὑπήκουσε [**327b**] καὶ σφόδρα, ὡς οὐδεὶς πώποτε ὧν ἐγὼ προσέτυχον νέων, καὶ τὸν ἐπίλοιπον βίον ζῆν ἠθέλησε διαφερόντως τῶν πολλῶν Ἰταλιωτῶν τε καὶ Σικελιωτῶν, ἀρετὴν περὶ πλείονος ἡδονῆς τῆς τε ἄλλης τρυφῆς ἠγαπηκώς· ὅθεν ἐπαχθέστερον τοῖς περὶ τὰ τυραννικὰ νόμιμα ζῶσιν ἐβίω μέχρι τοῦ θανάτου τοῦ περὶ Διονύσιον γενομένου.

μετὰ δὲ τοῦτο διενοήθη μὴ μόνον ἐν αὑτῷ ποτ' ἂν γενέσθαι ταύτην τὴν διάνοιαν, ἣν [**327c**] αὐτὸς ὑπὸ τῶν ὀρθῶν λόγων ἔσχεν, ἐγγιγνομένην δ' αὐτὴν καὶ ἐν ἄλλοις ὁρῶν κατενόει, πολλοῖς μὲν οὔ, γιγνομένην δ' οὖν ἔν τισιν, ὧν καὶ Διονύσιον ἡγήσατο ἕνα γενέσθαι τάχ' ἂν ξυλλαμβανόντων θεῶν, γενομένου δ' αὖ τοῦ τοιούτου τόν τε αὑτοῦ βίον καὶ τὸν τῶν ἄλλων Συρακουσίων ἀμήχανον ἂν μακαριότητι συμβῆναι γενόμενον. πρὸς δὴ τούτοις ᾠήθη δεῖν ἐκ παντὸς τρόπου εἰς Συρακούσας ὅ τι τάχιστα ἐλθεῖν ἐμὲ [**327d**] κοινωνὸν τούτων, μεμνημένος τήν τε αὑτοῦ καὶ ἐμὴν συνουσίαν, ὡς εὐπετῶς ἐξειργάσατο εἰς ἐπιθυμίαν ἐλθεῖν αὐτὸν τοῦ καλλίστου τε καὶ ἀρίστου βίου· ὃ δὴ καὶ νῦν εἰ διαπράξαιτο ἐν Διονυσίῳ ὡς ἐπεχείρησε, μεγάλας ἐλπίδας εἶχεν ἄνευ σφαγῶν καὶ θανάτων καὶ τῶν νῦν γεγονότων κακῶν βίον ἂν εὐδαίμονα καὶ ἀληθινὸν ἐν πάσῃ τῇ χώρᾳ κατασκευάσαι.

With these things in mind, along with those referred to earlier, I crossed over to Syracuse, [**326e**] perhaps by chance, but more likely by some superior power's contrivance to lay the foundation for the things that have now befallen Dion and Syracuse. And I fear that still more will arise, if you do not now defer to me as I advise you for the second time.

Why, therefore, do I say [**327a**] that my arrival in Sicily was the beginning of all these things? As I spent time with Dion, then a young man, and revealed in conversation what I thought to be best for people, advising him to act accordingly, I dared to ignore the possibility that I could be in some way engineering, unwittingly, the eventual dissolution of the tyranny. For in fact Dion was an astute student of all things, including the arguments that I presented at the time, and he listened with such extraordinary [**327b**] acumen, like no other young man I've ever met, and he desired to live the remainder of his life differently from the majority of Italians and Sicilians, loving virtue more than pleasure or any other extravagance. As a result, he began to pass his time in a way that was obnoxious to those who were living according to the customs of the tyranny up until the death of Dionysius.

Afterwards, Dion began to think that he was not the only one to think this way, which [**327c**] he had acquired through proper reasoning, and he thought he saw it in a few others – not many, but some – and he believed that with the gods' assistance, Dionysius could soon become one of those people, and that if Dionysius did become such a man then life for both him and the rest of the Syracusans would in turn become extra-ordinarily blessed. On top of this, he thought that I should come to Syracuse as quickly as possible [**327d**] to be his partner in this venture, recalling the time he and I had spent together and how easily he had learned to desire the best and most beautiful of lives. Moreover, if he could now also bring this about in Dionysius, as he was endeavoring, he held the lofty hope of creating a happy and genuine existence throughout the entire land, one without slaughters and murders and all the current atrocities.

ταῦτα Δίων ὀρθῶς διανοηθεὶς ἔπεισε μεταπέμπεσθαι Διονύσιον ἐμέ, καὶ αὐτὸς ἐδεῖτο πέμπων ἥκειν ὅ τι τάχιστα ἐκ **[327e]** παντὸς τρόπου, πρίν τινας ἄλλους ἐντυχόντας Διονυσίῳ ἐπ' ἄλλον βίον αὐτὸν τοῦ βελτίστου παρατρέψαι. λέγων δὲ τάδε ἐδεῖτο, εἰ καὶ μακρότερα εἰπεῖν. "τίνας γὰρ καιρούς," ἔφη, "μείζους περιμενοῦμεν τῶν νῦν παραγεγονότων θείᾳ τινὶ τύχῃ;" καταλέγων δὲ τήν τε ἀρχὴν τῆς Ἰταλίας καὶ Σικελίας **[328a]** καὶ τὴν αὑτοῦ δύναμιν ἐν αὐτῇ, καὶ τὴν νεότητα καὶ τὴν ἐπιθυμίαν τὴν Διονυσίου, φιλοσοφίας τε καὶ παιδείας ὡς ἔχοι σφόδρα, λέγων, τούς τε αὑτοῦ ἀδελφιδοῦς καὶ τοὺς οἰκείους ὡς εὐπαράκλητοι εἶεν πρὸς τὸν ὑπ' ἐμοῦ λεγόμενον ἀεὶ λόγον καὶ βίον, ἱκανώτατοί τε Διονύσιον συμπαρακαλεῖν, ὥστε, εἴπερ ποτέ, καὶ νῦν ἐλπὶς πᾶσα ἀποτελεσθήσεται τοῦ τοὺς αὐτοὺς φιλοσόφους τε καὶ πόλεων ἄρχοντας μεγάλων **[328b]** συμβῆναι γενομένους.

τὰ μὲν δὴ παρακελεύματα ἦν ταῦτά τε καὶ τοιαῦτα ἕτερα πάμπολλα, τὴν δ' ἐμὴν δόξαν, τὸ μὲν περὶ τῶν νέων ὅπῃ ποτὲ γενήσοιτο, εἶχε φόβος—αἱ γὰρ ἐπιθυμίαι τῶν τοιούτων ταχεῖαι καὶ πολλάκις ἑαυταῖς ἐναντίαι φερόμεναι—, τὸ δὲ Δίωνος ἠπιστάμην τῆς ψυχῆς πέρι φύσει τε ἐμβριθὲς ὂν ἡλικίας τε ἤδη μετρίως ἔχον. ὅθεν μοι σκοπουμένῳ καὶ διστάζοντι πότερον εἴη πορευτέον καὶ ὑπακουστέον ἢ πῶς, ὅμως ἔρρεψε δεῖν, εἴ ποτέ τις τὰ διανοηθέντα **[328c]** περὶ νόμων τε καὶ πολιτείας ἀποτελεῖν ἐγχειρήσοι, καὶ νῦν πειρατέον εἶναι· πείσας γὰρ ἕνα μόνον ἱκανῶς πάντα ἐξειργασμένος ἐσοίμην ἀγαθά.

ταύτῃ μὲν δὴ τῇ διανοίᾳ τε καὶ τόλμῃ ἀπῆρα οἴκοθεν, οὐχ ἧ τινὲς ἐδόξαζον, ἀλλ' αἰσχυνόμενος μὲν ἐμαυτὸν τὸ μέγιστον, μὴ δόξαιμί ποτε ἐμαυτῷ παντάπασι λόγος μόνον ἀτεχνῶς εἶναι τις, ἔργου δὲ οὐδενὸς ἄν ποτε ἑκὼν ἀνθάψασθαι, κινδυνεύσειν δὲ προδοῦναι πρῶτον **[328d]** μὲν τὴν Δίωνος ξενίαν τε καὶ ἑταιρείαν ἐν κινδύνοις ὄντως γεγονότος οὐ σμικροῖς.

It was with such virtuous intentions that Dion convinced Dionysius to send for me, and Dion himself summoned me and implored me to come as quickly as possible [**327e**] and by whatever means, before Dionysius should fall in with anyone else who might steer him towards a lifestyle other than the best one. He implored me with the following words, though they are rather long to repeat: "what more opportune moment," he said, "are we waiting for than the one that is now at hand by some divine providence?" He described the realm of Italy and Sicily [**328a**] and his own power within it, mentioning the youth of Dionysius and his great eagerness for education and philosophy. And he spoke of his own nephews and relatives, how they would be easily influenced by the reasoning and lifestyle that I advocated, and in turn most capable of motivating Dionysius, so that now, if ever, all our hopes of the same people being both philosophers and leaders of great cities [**328b**] would come into fruition.

These were the exhortations he made, along with many others of this sort. As for my own opinion, I feared for the young people involved and what would become of them, for their desires are fleeting and often contradictory, though regarding Dion's character, I knew that his spirit was by nature serious and had already matured in due measure. Therefore, as I pondered the situation and vacillated about whether or not to listen to him and make the crossing, I was ultimately inclined to think that if ever one were to try to accomplish the things I had in mind [**328c**] about laws and government, it had to be attempted now. For if I could adequately convince a single person, I would accomplish something of absolute good.

It was with such intentions and convictions, then, that I left home, not with those that some have surmised. On the contrary, I felt within myself great trepidation at the thought that I might find myself to be nothing more than a voice, pure and simple, incapable of taking on any concrete action, and that I would risk betraying first of all [**328d**] the hospitality and friendship of Dion, who was, in reality, in no small amount of danger.

εἴτ' οὖν πάθοι τι, εἴτ' ἐκπεσὼν ὑπὸ Διονυσίου καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἐχθρῶν ἔλθοι παρ' ἡμᾶς φεύγων καὶ ἀνέροιτο εἰπών "ὦ Πλάτων, ἥκω σοι φυγὰς οὐχ ὁπλιτῶν δεόμενος οὐδὲ ἱππέων ἐνδεὴς γενόμενος τοῦ ἀμύνασθαι τοὺς ἐχθρούς, ἀλλὰ λόγων καὶ πειθοῦς, ᾗ σὲ μάλιστα ἠπιστάμην ἐγὼ δυνάμενον ἀνθρώπους νέους ἐπὶ τὰ ἀγαθὰ καὶ τὰ δίκαια προτρέποντα εἰς φιλίαν τε καὶ ἑταιρείαν ἀλλήλοις **[328e]** καθιστάναι ἑκάστοτε· ὧν ἐνδείᾳ κατὰ τὸ σὸν μέρος νῦν ἐγὼ καταλιπὼν Συρακούσας ἐνθάδε πάρειμι. καὶ τὸ μὲν ἐμὸν ἔλαττον ὄνειδός σοι φέρει· φιλοσοφία δέ, ἣν ἐγκωμιάζεις ἀεὶ καὶ ἀτίμως φῂς ὑπὸ τῶν λοιπῶν ἀνθρώπων φέρεσθαι, πῶς οὐ προδέδοται τὰ νῦν μετ' ἐμοῦ μέρος ὅσον ἐπὶ σοὶ γέγονεν; **[329a]** καὶ Μεγαροῖ μὲν εἰ κατοικοῦντες ἐτυγχάνομεν, ἦλθες δή που ἄν μοι βοηθὸς ἐφ' ἅ σε παρεκάλουν, ἢ πάντων ἂν φαυλότατον ἡγοῦ σαυτόν· νῦν δ' ἄρα τὸ μῆκος τῆς πορείας καὶ τὸ μέγεθος δὴ τοῦ πλοῦ καὶ τοῦ πόνου ἐπαιτιώμενος οἴει δόξαν κακίας ἀποφευξεῖσθαί ποτε; πολλοῦ καὶ δεήσει."

λεχθέντων δὲ τούτων τίς ἂν ἦν μοι πρὸς ταῦτα εὐσχήμων ἀπόκρισις; οὐκ ἔστιν. ἀλλ' ἦλθον μὲν κατὰ λόγον ἐν δίκῃ τε, **[329b]** ὡς οἷόν τε ἄνθρωπον μάλιστα, διά τὰ τοιαῦτα καταλιπὼν τὰς ἐμαυτοῦ διατριβάς, οὔσας οὐκ ἀσχήμονας, ὑπὸ τυραννίδα δοκοῦσαν οὐ πρέπειν τοῖς ἐμοῖς λόγοις οὐδὲ ἐμοί· ἐλθών τε ἐμαυτὸν ἠλευθέρωσα Διὸς ξενίου[2] καὶ τῆς φιλοσόφου ἀνέγκλητον μοίρας παρέσχον, ἐπονειδίστου γενομένης ἄν εἴ τι καταμαλθακισθεὶς καὶ ἀποδειλιῶν αἰσχύνης μετέσχον κακῆς.

ἐλθὼν δέ, οὐ γὰρ δεῖ μηκύνειν, εὗρον στάσεως τὰ περὶ Διονύσιον μεστὰ ξύμπαντα καὶ διαβολῶν **[329c]** πρὸς τὴν τυραννίδα Δίωνος πέρι. ἤμυνον μὲν οὖν καθ' ὅσον ἠδυνάμην, σμικρὰ δ' οἷός τ' ἦν, μηνὶ δὲ σχεδὸν ἴσως τετάρτῳ Δίωνα Διονύσιος αἰτιώμενος ἐπιβουλεύειν τῇ τυραννίδι, σμικρὸν εἰς πλοῖον ἐμβιβάσας, ἐξέβαλεν ἀτίμως.

[2] The Zeus who oversees bonds of "guest-friendship" (*xenia*), the type of relationship that Plato and Dion shared.

In any case, if he were to come to me – either because something bad had happened to him or because he had been exiled by Dionysius and his other enemies – and if he were to inquire of me in the following words: "Plato, I come to you as an exile, not to beg for hoplites or horsemen with which to protect myself against my enemies, but in need of the words and persuasiveness with which I know that you, above all, bring young people around to what is good and just, and are most capable of creating feelings of friendship and comradery [**328e**] among them. It is for want of these things, something for which you share some blame, that I have left Syracuse and am now here. You bear less blame for my own situation, but is it not your responsibility to see to it that philosophy – which you always praise and say is treated disgracefully by other men – not be betrayed along with me? [**329a**] If I were living in Megara, you would have doubtless come to help me in the matters to which I summoned you, or else considered yourself the worst of all men. As it is, however, do you really think you can avoid the reputation of a scoundrel by complaining of the length of the journey and of the magnitude of the travel and work involved? You will need a much better excuse than that."

What decent response could I give to such words? There is none. So I came, following both reason and justice [**329b**] (as much as a person can), and on these grounds I set aside my own studies, which were not insignificant, and I came to live under a tyranny that was suitable neither for myself nor for my words. And in coming, I freed myself of my obligation to Zeus *Xenios*, and I gave no grounds for reproach to the order of philosophy, which would have shouldered the blame if, worn down and cowed, I had engaged in such disgraceful behavior.

To make a long story short, when I arrived I found that everything around Dionysius was in a state of discord, and that numerous false accusations [**329c**] against Dion had been brought before the tyrant. I defended him as much I could, little as that was, but about three months later Dionysius accused Dion of plotting against the tyranny, and after putting him on board a small boat, he banished him in a most dishonorable fashion.

οἱ δὴ Δίωνος τὸ μετὰ τοῦτο πάντες φίλοι ἐφοβούμεθα μή τινα ἐπαιτιώμενος τιμωροῖτο ὡς συναίτιον τῆς Δίωνος ἐπιβουλῆς· περὶ δ' ἐμοῦ καὶ διῆλθε λόγος τις ἐν Συρακούσαις, ὡς τεθνεὼς εἴην ὑπὸ Διονυσίου ὡς τούτων ἁπάντων τῶν τότε [**329d**] γεγονότων αἴτιος. ὁ δὲ αἰσθανόμενος πάντας ἡμᾶς οὕτω διατεθέντας, φοβούμενος μὴ μεῖζον ἐκ τῶν φόβων γένοιτό τι, φιλοφρόνως πάντας ἀνελάμβανε, καὶ δὴ καὶ τὸν ἐμὲ παρεμυθεῖτό τε καὶ θαρρεῖν διεκελεύετο καὶ ἐδεῖτο πάντως μένειν·ἐγίγνετο γάρ οἱ τὸ μὲν ἐμὲ φυγεῖν ἀπ' αὐτοῦ καλὸν οὐδέν, τὸ δὲ μένειν, διὸ δὴ καὶ σφόδρα προσποιεῖτο δεῖσθαι·

τὰς δὲ τῶν τυράννων δεήσεις ἴσμεν, ὅτι μεμιγμέναι ἀνάγκαις [**329e**] εἰσίν· ὃ δὴ μηχανώμενος διεκώλυέ μου τὸν ἔκπλουν, εἰς ἀκρόπολιν ἀγαγὼν καὶ κατοικίσας ὅθεν οὐδ' ἂν εἷς ἔτι με ναύκληρος μὴ ὅτι κωλύοντος ἐξήγαγε Διονυσίου, ἀλλ' οὐδ' εἰ μὴ πέμπων αὐτὸς τὸν κελεύοντα ἐξαγαγεῖν ἐπέστελλεν, οὔτ' ἂν ἔμπορος οὔτε τῶν ἐν ταῖς τῆς χώρας ἐξόδοις ἀρχόντων οὐδ' ἂν εἷς περιεῖδέ με μόνον ἐκπορευόμενον, ὃς οὐκ ἂν συλλαβὼν εὐθέως παρὰ Διονύσιον πάλιν ἀπήγαγεν, ἄλλως τε καὶ διηγγελμένον ἤδη ποτὲ τοὐναντίον ἢ [**330a**] τὸ πρότερον πάλιν, ὡς Πλάτωνα Διονύσιος θαυμαστῶς ὡς ἀσπάζεται.

τὸ δ' εἶχε δὴ πῶς; τὸ γὰρ ἀληθὲς δεῖ φράζειν. ἠσπάζετο μὲν ἀεὶ προϊόντος τοῦ χρόνου μᾶλλον κατὰ τὴν τοῦ τρόπου τε καὶ ἤθους συνουσίαν, ἑαυτὸν δὲ ἐπαινεῖν μᾶλλον ἢ Δίωνα ἐβούλετό με καὶ φίλον ἡγεῖσθαι διαφερόντως μᾶλλον ἢ 'κεῖνον, καὶ θαυμαστῶς ἐφιλονείκει πρὸς τὸ τοιοῦτον. ᾗ δ' ἂν οὕτως ἐγένετο, εἴπερ ἐγίγνετο, κάλλιστα, ὤκνει [**330b**] ὡς δὴ μανθάνων καὶ ἀκούων τῶν περὶ φιλοσοφίαν λόγων οἰκειοῦσθαι καὶ ἐμοὶ συγγίγνεσθαι, φοβούμενος τοὺς τῶν διαβαλλόντων λόγους, μή πῃ παραποδισθείη καὶ Δίων δὴ πάντα εἴη διαπεπραγμένος. ἐγὼ δὲ πάντα ὑπέμενον, τὴν πρώτην διάνοιαν φυλάττων ἥπερ ἀφικόμην, εἴ πως εἰς ἐπιθυμίαν ἔλθοι τῆς φιλοσόφου ζωῆς. ὁ δ' ἐνίκησεν ἀντιτείνων.

Of course, after this those of us who were friends with Dion were all afraid that we would be accused of and punished for being in league with Dion's conspiracy. In my particular case, word got around Syracuse that I had been executed by Dionysius as the one responsible for [**329d**] everything that had happened. But Dionysius perceived how we all felt, and, afraid that something larger might arise from our fears, he received us all most warmly. What is more, he expressly reassured me and encouraged me to keep my spirits high, and he implored me to remain by all means. Indeed, my fleeing from him would have been not at all good for him, whereas my remaining… Well, it was for this reason that Dionysius pretended to need it so desperately.

As we know, however, the requests of tyrants are compounded by [**329e**] coercion. And to engineer my permanence he simply prevented my departure: he brought me to the acropolisa and put me up in a place from which not a single captain would have taken me away – not without Dionysius himself sending someone with instructions to give me passage, let alone if he expressly forbade it. And there was no merchant, no official in the country's ports of exit, not a single person who saw me leaving on my own who would not have arrested me immediately and taken me back to Dionysius. Especially because by now it had been broadcast, in contrast to [**330a**] earlier reports, that Dionysius was marvelously pleased with Plato!

But how did things really stand? Truth be told, as time went by, in sharing my habits and my way of life he became more and more pleased. But he constantly wanted me to praise him more and to consider him more of a friend than Dion, and he was absolutely determined to win that battle. At the same time, he shied away from the best means by which that could be achieved, if indeed it ever could be, [**330b**] which is to say by learning and listening to my discourses on philosophy, spending time and being friendly with me; he feared the gossip of scandal-mongers, worried that he might somehow get tripped up and that Dion would achieve all his ends. I myself abided and maintained the same intentions with which I first arrived, in the hopes that he might come around to a yearning for the philosophical life. But his resistance won out.

καὶ ὁ πρῶτος δὴ χρόνος τῆς εἰς Σικελίαν ἐμῆς ἐπιδημήσεώς **[330c]** τε καὶ διατριβῆς διὰ πάντα ταῦτα ξυνέβη γενόμενος. μετὰ δὲ τοῦτο ἀπεδήμησά τε καὶ πάλιν ἀφικόμην πάσῃ σπουδῇ μεταπεμπομένου Διονυσίου· ὧν δὲ ἕνεκα καὶ ὅσα ἔπραξα, ὡς εἰκότα τε καὶ δίκαια, ὑμῖν πρῶτον μὲν ξυμβουλεύσας ἃ χρὴ ποιεῖν ἐκ τῶν νῦν γεγονότων, ὕστερον τὰ περὶ ταῦτα διέξειμι, τῶν ἐπανερωτώντων ἕνεκα τί δὴ βουλόμενος ἦλθον τὸ δεύτερον, ἵνα μὴ τὰ πάρεργα ὡς ἔργα μοι ξυμβαίνῃ λεγόμενα.

λέγω δὴ τάδε ἐγώ. τὸν συμβουλεύοντα ἀνδρὶ κάμνοντι καὶ δίαιταν διαιτωμένῳ **[330d]** μοχθηρὰν πρὸς ὑγίειαν ἄλλο τι χρὴ πρῶτον μὲν αὐτὸν μεταβάλλειν τὸν βίον, καὶ ἐθέλοντι μὲν πείθεσθαι καὶ τἆλλα ἤδη παραινεῖν; μὴ ἐθέλοντι δέ, φεύγοντα ἀπὸ τῆς τοῦ τοιούτου ξυμβουλῆς ἄνδρα τε ἡγοίμην ἂν καὶ ἰατρικόν, τὸν δὲ ὑπομένοντα τοὐναντίον ἄνανδρόν τε καὶ ἄτεχνον.

ταὐτὸν δὴ καὶ πόλει, εἴτε αὐτῆς εἷς εἴη κύριος εἴτε καὶ πλείους, εἰ μὲν κατὰ τρόπον ὀρθῇ πορευομένης ὁδῷ τῆς πολιτείας ξυμβουλεύοιτό **[330e]** τι τῶν προσφόρων, νοῦν ἔχοντος τὸ τοῖς τοιούτοις ξυμβουλεύειν· τοῖς δ' ἔξω τὸ παράπαν βαίνουσι τῆς ὀρθῆς πολιτείας καὶ μηδαμῇ ἐθέλουσιν αὐτῆς εἰς ἴχνος ἰέναι, προαγορεύουσι δὲ τῷ ξυμβούλῳ τὴν μὲν πολιτείαν ἐᾶν καὶ μὴ **[331a]** κινεῖν, ὡς ἀποθανουμένῳ ἐὰν κινῇ, τὰ δὲ βουλήσεσι καὶ ἐπιθυμίαις αὐτῶν ὑπηρετοῦντα ξυμβουλεύειν κελεύουσι τίνα τρόπον γίγνοιτ' ἂν ῥᾷστά τε καὶ τάχιστα εἰς τὸν ἀεὶ χρόνον, τὸν μὲν ὑπομένοντα ξυμβουλὰς τοιαύτας ἡγοίμην ἂν ἄνανδρον, τὸν δ'οὐχ ὑπομένοντα ἄνδρα.

And so it turned out that I spent the period of my first stay in Sicily [**330c**] engaged in all these things. After this I departed and then came back again after Dionysius summoned me most urgently. For those of you who ask what I wished to accomplish in coming a second time, I will address later the things that I did and on what account, and why they were reasonable and justified. But only after I have first advised you as to what must be done in the present circumstances, otherwise my second order of business may end up the focus.

This, then, is what I have to say: shouldn't someone advising a man who is struggling and leading a degenerate [**330d**] sort of life suggest first of all that he change his lifestyle, and only make other recommendations if this man is willing to listen? And if he is not willing to do so, well, I would consider someone who gets out of advising such a person to be courageous and skilled in the art of medicine, and someone who stays on to be unskilled and cowardly.

The same thing holds true with regard to a city, whether one person or many be in charge of it: if, on the one hand, the government is being guided down a straight path, and an adviser is sought concerning [**330e**] some suitable course of action, it is proper for a sensible person to give advice in this situation. Conversely, when those seeking advice tread well outside the boundaries of proper governance and in no way wish to fall back into line; if they tell their adviser to first of all let the government be and not to [**331a**] disturb it in any way, on penalty of death; and if they insist that he give advice as to how that which caters to their passions and desires might most quickly and easily become permanent; well, I would consider someone who stayed on for such consultations to be a coward, and someone who refused to do so to be courageous.

ταύτην δὴ τὴν διάνοιαν ἐγὼ κεκτημένος, ὅταν τίς μοι ξυμβουλεύηται περί τινος τῶν μεγίστων περὶ τὸν αὑτοῦ βίον, οἷον περὶ χρημάτων κτήσεως [**331b**] ἢ περὶ σώματος ἢ ψυχῆς ἐπιμελείας, ἂν μέν μοι τὸ καθ' ἡμέραν ἔν τινι τρόπῳ δοκῇ ζῆν ἢ συμβουλεύσαντος ἂν ἐθέλειν πείθεσθαι περὶ ὧν ἀνακοινοῦται, προθύμως ξυμβουλεύω καὶ οὐκ ἀφοσιωσάμενος μόνον ἐπαυσάμην.

ἐὰν δὲ μὴ ξυμβουλεύηταί μοι τὸ παράπαν ἢ συμβουλεύοντι δῆλος ᾖ μηδαμῇ πεισόμενος, αὐτόκλητος ἐπὶ τὸν τοιοῦτον οὐκ ἔρχομαι ξυμβουλεύσων, βιασόμενος δὲ οὐδ' ἂν υἱὸς ᾖ μου. δούλῳ δὲ ξυμβουλεύσαιμ' ἂν καὶ μὴ ἐθέλοντά γε προσβιαζοίμην. [**331c**] πατέρα δὲ ἢ μητέρα οὐχ ὅσιον ἡγοῦμαι προσβιάζεσθαι μὴ νόσῳ παραφροσύνης ἐχομένους· ἐὰν δέ τινα καθεστῶτα ζῶσι βίον, ἑαυτοῖς ἀρέσκοντα, ἐμοὶ δὲ μή, μήτε ἀπεχθάνεσθαι μάτην νουθετοῦντα μήτε δὴ κολακεύοντά γε ὑπηρετεῖν αὐτοῖς, πληρώσεις ἐπιθυμιῶν ἐκπορίζοντα ἃς αὐτὸς ἀσπαζόμενος οὐκ ἂν ἐθέλοιμι ζῆν.

ταὐτὸν δὴ καὶ περὶ πόλεως αὑτοῦ διανοούμενον χρὴ ζῆν τὸν ἔμφρονα· λέγειν μέν, εἰ μὴ [**331d**] καλῶς αὐτῷ φαίνοιτο πολιτεύεσθαι, εἰ μέλλοι μήτε ματαίως ἐρεῖν μήτε ἀποθανεῖσθαι λέγων, βίαν δὲ πατρίδι πολιτείας μεταβολῆς μὴ προσφέρειν, ὅταν ἄνευ φυγῶν καὶ σφαγῆς ἀνδρῶν μὴ δυνατὸν ᾖ γίγνεσθαι τὴν ἀρίστην, ἡσυχίαν δὲ ἄγοντα εὔχεσθαι τὰ ἀγαθὰ αὑτῷ τε καὶ τῇ πόλει.

Indeed, this is the attitude that I maintain whenever anyone consults me about something important in his life, such as about the acquisition of wealth, [**331b**] or about caring for his body or soul. If this person seems to be living his daily life in a reasonable manner, or to be willing to listen to the things shared by the person who is consulted, then I advise eagerly and do not give up after I have made only a token effort.

But if a person does not consult me at all, or if it is clear that he will not listen to his adviser, I will neither give unsolicited advice to such a person nor coerce him, not even if he were my own son. Now, I would advise a slave and would use force if he were unwilling, [**331c**] but I do not think it is permissible to use force with a father or a mother, unless they are sick and in a state of delirium. On the other hand, if they are living a settled sort of life that is satisfying to them, though not to me, it is not up to me to alienate them in vain by rebuking them, nor to minister to them with flattery, nor to provide them with the satisfaction of desires in the clutches of which I myself would not want to live.

Surely, a sensible person must lead his life keeping the same thing in mind when it comes to his own city: he should speak up if [**331d**] he thinks his city is governed poorly, as long as he would neither speak in vain nor die for his words. But whenever it is impossible for a city to become excellent without banishments and massacres, he should not employ violence against his fatherland for the sake of a political revolution; instead, he should keep his peace and pray for the best things both for himself and for the city.

κατὰ δὴ τοῦτον τὸν τρόπον ἐγὼ ὑμῖν τ' ἂν ξυμβουλεύοιμι, ξυνεβούλευον δὲ καὶ Διονυσίῳ μετὰ Δίωνος, ζῆν μὲν τὸ καθ' ἡμέραν πρῶτον, ὅπως ἐγκρατὴς αὐτὸς αὑτοῦ ὅ τι μάλιστα [**331e**] ἔσεσθαι μέλλοι καὶ πιστοὺς φίλους τε καὶ ἑταίρους κτήσεσθαι, ὅπως μὴ πάθοι ἅπερ ὁ πατὴρ αὐτοῦ, ὃς παραλαβὼν Σικελίας πολλὰς καὶ μεγάλας πόλεις ὑπὸ τῶν βαρβάρων ἐκπεπορθημένας, οὐχ οἷός τ' ἦν κατοικίσας πολιτείας ἐν ἑκάσταις καταστήσασθαι πιστὰς ἑταίρων ἀνδρῶν, οὔτε ἄλλων δή [**332a**] ποθεν ὀθνείων οὔτε ἀδελφῶν, οὓς ἔθρεψέ τε αὐτὸς νεωτέρους ὄντας ἔκ τε ἰδιωτῶν ἄρχοντας καὶ ἐκ πενήτων πλουσίους ἐπεποιήκει διαφερόντως.

τούτων κοινωνὸν τῆς ἀρχῆς οὐδένα οἷός τ' ἦν πειθοῖ καὶ διδαχῇ καὶ εὐεργεσίαις καὶ ξυγγενείαις ἀπεργασάμενος ποιήσασθαι, Δαρείου δὲ ἑπταπλασίῳ φαυλότερος ἐγένετο, ὃς οὐκ ἀδελφοῖς πιστεύσας οὐδ' ὑφ' αὑτοῦ τραφεῖσι, κοινωνοῖς δὲ μόνον τῆς τοῦ Μήδου τε [**332b**] καὶ εὐνούχου χειρώσεως, διένειμέ τε μέρη μείζω ἕκαστα Σικελίας πάσης ἑπτά καὶ πιστοῖς ἐχρήσατο τοῖς κοινωνοῖς καὶ οὐκ ἐπιτιθεμένοις οὔτε αὐτῷ οὔτε ἀλλήλοις, ἔδειξέ τε παράδειγμα οἷον χρὴ τὸν νομοθέτην καὶ βασιλέα τὸν ἀγαθὸν γίγνεσθαι· νόμους γὰρ κατασκευάσας ἔτι καὶ νῦν διασέσωκε τὴν Περσῶν ἀρχήν.

ἔτι δὲ Ἀθηναῖοι πρὸς τούτοις, οὐκ αὐτοὶ κατοικίσαντες πολλὰς τῶν Ἑλλήνων πόλεις ὑπὸ βαρβάρων ἐμβεβλημένας[3] [ἀλλ' οἰκουμένας] παραλαβόντες, ὅμως [**332c**] ἑβδομήκοντα ἔτη διεφύλαξαν τὴν ἀρχὴν ἄνδρας φίλους ἐν ταῖς πόλεσιν ἑκάσταις κεκτημένοι. Διονύσιος δὲ εἰς μίαν πόλιν ἀθροίσας πᾶσαν Σικελίαν ὑπὸ σοφίας πιστεύων οὐδενί μόγις ἐσώθη· πένης γὰρ ἦν ἀνδρῶν φίλων καὶ πιστῶν, οὗ μεῖζον σημεῖον εἰς ἀρετὴν καὶ κακίαν οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδέν, τοῦ ἔρημον ἢ μὴ τοιούτων ἀνδρῶν εἶναι.

[3] I diverge here from Henderson (op. cit.), who prefers ἐκβεβλημένας. Both readings are present in the manuscripts, though ἐμβεβλημένας appears to be a later correction.

It is according to this principle that I would advise you, and that I advised Dionysius along with Dion: first of all to live his daily life so as to become, as much as possible, [**331e**] master of himself, and also to acquire dependable friends and companions, so as to avoid suffering the things that his father did. For his father, after taking many of the great cities of Sicily that had previously been sacked by barbarians, was not able to settle and establish in each one administrations of reliable associates, neither of strangers [**332a**] of any origin nor indeed of brothers whom he himself had raised from a young age and had variously turned from private citizens into leaders, from poor men into exceptionally rich ones.

Not by persuasion, instruction, benefaction, or kinship was he able to make any of these men a partner to his rule. Rather, he was seven times worse off than Darius who, not trusting his kin, not even the ones he himself had raised, but only those who had been partners in his conquest of the Mede [**332b**] and the Eunuch, distributed among these seven lots, each one bigger than all of Sicily, and provided himself with reliable partners who made attempts neither against him nor each other. He thus created the model of how a good king and lawmaker should act, for he established laws that even now help preserve the Persian empire.

Beyond that example, the Athenians have also taken numerous Greek cities that they did not settle themselves, but which had been invaded by barbarians, and they have nevertheless [**332c**] maintained this empire for eighty years and acquired in each of these cities men that are well-disposed to them. Dionysius,[4] on the other hand, lumped all of Sicily into a single polity, and as a result of his prudence he trusted no one, and barely survived. For he was poor in men who were friendly or loyal, and there is no greater sign of virtue or depravity than whether or not one is bereft of such men.

[4] Referring here to Dionysius I, father of Dionysius II and brother-in-law of Dion.

ἃ δὴ καὶ Διονυσίῳ ξυνεβουλεύομεν ἐγὼ καὶ Δίων ἐπειδὴ τὰ παρὰ πατρὸς [**332d**] αὐτῷ ξυνεβεβήκει οὕτως ἀνομιλήτῳ μὲν παιδείας, ἀνομιλήτῳ δὲ συνουσιῶν τῶν προσηκουσῶν γεγονέναι, πρῶτον ἐπὶ ταῦτα ὁρμήσαντα φίλους ἄλλους αὑτῷ τῶν οἰκείων ἅμα καὶ ἡλικιωτῶν καὶ συμφώνους πρὸς ἀρετὴν κτήσασθαι, μάλιστα δ' αὐτὸν αὑτῷ, τούτου γὰρ αὐτὸν θαυμαστῶς ἐνδεᾶ γεγονέναι, λέγοντες οὐκ ἐναργῶς οὕτως, οὐ γὰρ ἦν ἀσφαλές, αἰνιττόμενοι δὲ καὶ διαμαχόμενοι τοῖς λόγοις ὡς οὕτω μὲν πᾶς ἀνὴρ αὑτόν τε καὶ ἐκείνους ὧν ἂν ἡγεμὼν γίγνηται σώσει, [**332e**] μὴ ταύτῃ δὲ τραπόμενος τἀναντία πάντα ἀποτελεῖ·

πορευθεὶς δὲ ὡς λέγομεν, καὶ ἑαυτὸν ἔμφρονά τε καὶ σώφρονα ἀπεργασάμενος, εἰ τὰς ἐξηρημωμένας Σικελίας πόλεις κατοικίσειε νόμοις τε ξυνδήσειε καὶ πολιτείαις, ὥστε αὑτῷ τε οἰκείας καὶ ἀλλήλαις εἶναι πρὸς τὰς τῶν βαρβάρων βοηθείας, οὐ [**333a**] διπλασίαν τὴν πατρῴαν ἀρχὴν μόνον ποιήσοι, πολλαπλασίαν δὲ ὄντως· ἕτοιμον γὰρ εἶναι τούτων γενομένων πολὺ μᾶλλον δουλώσασθαι Καρχηδονίους τῆς ἐπὶ Γέλωνος αὐτοῖς γενομένης δουλείας, ἀλλ' οὐχ ὥσπερ νῦν τοὐναντίον ὁ πατὴρ αὐτοῦ φόρον ἐτάξατο φέρειν τοῖς βαρβάροις.

This, then, is what Dion and I advised Dionysius, seeing as his father's affairs [**332d**] had left him without either an education or suitable social connections: first, that he try to acquire for himself other friends who were in tune with virtue, both from among his relatives and from others his age; and above all that he be such a person himself, for in this he was remarkably lacking. Now, we were not entirely frank in our discussions – indeed it would not have been safe. Instead, we intimated and conveyed through argumentation that this is the way that every man saves both himself and whomever he leads, [**332e**] while by not taking this course one accomplishes the complete opposite.

Moreover, if he pursued the path that we suggested and made himself both wise and prudent, and if he settled the abandoned cities of Sicily and bound them together under laws and constitutions, so that they would be united both with him and each other against the forces of the barbarians, he would not only [**333a**] double his father's kingdom but in fact multiply it. For if all this happened, he would be ready to make the Carthaginians subject to the same yoke they had been under in the time of Gelon, unlike now, conversely, where his father had agreed to pay tribute to the barbarians.

ταῦτα ἦν τὰ λεγόμενα καὶ παρακελευόμενα ὑφ' ἡμῶν τῶν ἐπιβουλευόντων Διονυσίῳ, ὡς πολλαχόθεν ἐχώρουν οἱ τοιοῦτοι λόγοι, οἳ δὴ καὶ κρατήσαντες παρὰ Διονυσίῳ ἐξέβαλον μὲν Δίωνα, ἡμᾶς [**333b**] δ' εἰς φόβον κατέβαλον. ἵνα δ' ἐκπεράνωμεν οὐκ ὀλίγα πράγματα [τὰ] ἐν ὀλίγῳ χρόνῳ, ἐλθὼν ἐκ Πελοποννήσου καὶ Ἀθηνῶν Δίων ἔργῳ τὸν Διονύσιον ἐνουθέτησεν. ἐπειδὴ δ' οὖν ἠλευθέρωσέ τε καὶ ἀπέδωκεν αὐτοῖς δὶς τὴν πόλιν, ταὐτὸν πρὸς Δίωνα Συρακόσιοι τότε ἔπαθον, ὅπερ καὶ Διονύσιος, ὅτε αὐτὸν ἐπεχείρει παιδεύσας καὶ θρέψας βασιλέα τῆς ἀρχῆς ἄξιον οὕτω κοινωνεῖν αὐτῷ τοῦ βίου παντός, ὁ δὲ τοῖς [**333c**] διαβάλλουσιν ‹ὑπήκουσεν› καὶ λέγουσιν ὡς ἐπιβουλεύων τῇ τυραννίδι Δίων πράττοι πάντα ὅσα ἔπραττεν ἐν τῷ τότε χρόνῳ, ἵνα ὁ μὲν παιδείᾳ δὴ τὸν νοῦν κεκληθεὶς ἀμελοῖ τῆς ἀρχῆς ἐπιτρέψας ἐκείνῳ, ὁ δὲ σφετερίσαιτο καὶ Διονύσιον ἐκβάλοι ἐκ τῆς ἀρχῆς δόλῳ. ταῦτα τότε ἐνίκησε καὶ τὸ δεύτερον ἐν Συρακοσίοις λεγόμενα, καὶ μάλα ἀτόπῳ τε καὶ αἰσχρᾷ νίκῃ τοῖς τῆς νίκης αἰτίοις.

οἷον γὰρ γέγονεν, ἀκοῦσαι χρὴ τοὺς [**333d**] ἐμὲ παρακαλοῦντας πρὸς τὰ νῦν πράγματα. ἦλθον Ἀθηναῖος ἀνὴρ ἐγώ, ἑταῖρος Δίωνος, σύμμαχος αὐτῷ, πρὸς τὸν τύραννον, ὅπως ἀντὶ πολέμου φιλίαν ποιήσαιμι· διαμαχόμενος δὲ τοῖς διαβάλλουσιν ἡττήθην. πείθοντος δὲ Διονυσίου τιμαῖς καὶ χρήμασι γενέσθαι μετ' αὐτοῦ ἐμὲ, μάρτυρά τε καὶ φίλον πρὸς τὴν εὐπρέπειαν τῆς ἐκβολῆς τῆς Δίωνος αὐτῷ γίγνεσθαι, τούτων δὴ τὸ πᾶν διήμαρτεν.

These were the things that we expressed and urged, though the rumors seeping in from all sides had it that we were plotting against Dionysius. And in the end, by prevailing upon Dionysius, these rumors served to banish Dion and [**333b**] to set off terror among us. To make a long story short, Dion left the Peloponnese and Athens and forcefully rebuked Dionysius. But when he had twice freed and returned the city to them, the Syracusans still felt the same way about Dion as Dionysius who, when Dion was trying to instruct and encourage him to be a king worthy of his reign and to thus be a partner in his life's work, had listened to those [**333c**] who were disparaging Dion and saying that everything he was doing in that time he was doing so that Dionysius would be so entranced by education that he would lose interest in ruling and turn things over to Dion, letting him then usurp the throne and banish Dionysius from the kingdom by treachery. These accusations won over the Syracusans a second time, and for those responsible it was a disgusting and shameful victory.

As for what transpired next, those of you [**333d**] who are summoning me to give advice concerning your present circumstances must hear about it. I came to the tyrant as an Athenian citizen, as an associate of Dion and an ally to him, and with the intention of forming a friendship rather than making war. But in my fight against the slanderers I was defeated. Dionysius, moreover, utterly failed in his attempt to persuade me, with money and honors, to remain with him as both a friend and a witness to the dignity of Dion's exile.

ὕστερον δὲ δὴ κατιὼν οἴκαδε [**333e**] Δίων ἀδελφὼ δύο προσλαμβάνει Ἀθήνηθεν, οὐκ ἐκ φιλοσοφίας γεγονότε φίλω, ἀλλ' ἐκ τῆς περιτρεχούσης ἑταιρείας ταύτης τῆς τῶν πλείστων φίλων,ἣν ἐκ τοῦ ξενίζειν τε καὶ μυεῖν καὶ ἐποπτεύειν πραγματεύονται.[5] καὶ δὴ καὶ τούτω τὼ ξυγκαταγαγόντε αὐτὸν φίλω ἐκ τούτων τε καὶ ἐκ τῆς πρὸς τὴν κάθοδον ὑπηρεσίας ἐγενέσθην ἑταίρω· ἐλθόντες [**334a**] δὲ εἰς Σικελίαν, ἐπειδὴ Δίωνα ᾔσθοντο διαβεβλημένον εἰς τοὺς ἐλευθερωθέντας ὑπ' αὐτοῦ Σικελιώτας ὡς ἐπιβουλεύοντα γενέσθαι τύραννον, οὐ μόνον τὸν ἑταῖρον καὶ ξένον προὔδοσαν, ἀλλ' οἷον τοῦ φόνου αὐτόχειρες ἐγένοντο, ὅπλα ἔχοντες ἐν ταῖς χερσὶν αὐτοὶ τοῖς φονεῦσι παρεστῶτες ἐπίκουροι.

καὶ τὸ μὲν αἰσχρὸν καὶ ἀνόσιον οὔτε παρίεμαι ἔγωγε οὔτε τι λέγω· πολλοῖς γὰρ καὶ ἄλλοις ὑμνεῖν ταῦτα ἐπιμελὲς [**334b**] καὶ εἰς τὸν ἔπειτα μελήσει χρόνον· τὸ δὲ Ἀθηναίων πέρι λεγόμενον, ὡς αἰσχύνην οὗτοι περιῆψαν τῇ πόλει, ἐξαιροῦμαι· φημὶ γὰρ κἀκεῖνον Ἀθηναῖον εἶναι ὃς οὐ προὔδωκε τὸν αὐτὸν τοῦτον, ἐξὸν χρήματα καὶ ἄλλας τιμὰς πολλὰς λαμβάνειν. οὐ γὰρ διὰ βαναύσου φιλότητος ἐγεγόνει φίλος, διὰ δὲ ἐλευθέρας παιδείας κοινωνίαν, ᾗ μόνῃ χρὴ πιστεύειν τὸν νοῦν κεκτημένον μᾶλλον ἢ ξυγγενείᾳ ψυχῶν καὶ σωμάτων· ὥστε οὐκ ἀξίω [**334c**] ὀνείδους γεγόνατον τῇ πόλει τὼ Δίωνα ἀποκτείναντε, ὡς ἐλλογίμω πώποτε ἄνδρε γενομένω.

[5] The reference here is to the Eleusinian mysteries, about which we have relatively little evidence. It appears that by the 4th century BCE participants had been divided into two groups: *mystai*, initiated into the rites for the first time, and *epoptai*, who had been initiated previously and witnessed the initiation of the *mystai*. Evidently, Dion had done this with two companions, one of whom was named Callippus (cf. Plut. *Dion* 54-58). See K. Clinton, "Stages of Initiation in the Eleusinian and Samothracian Mysteries," in *Greek Mysteries: The Archaeology of Ancient Greek Secret Cults*, ed. M.B. Cosmopoulos (London: Routledge, 2005), 50-78.

Later, while returning home from Athens, [**333e**] Dion was accompanied by two brothers who had become his friends not through the pursuit of philosophy, but from the sort of relationship that many friends have and that one develops through entertaining and by becoming initiands into and then witnesses to the Mysteries together. It was above all from these experiences that these two men became Dion's friends and accompanied and assisted him on his journey home. But when they [**334a**] arrived in Sicily, and when they understood that Dion was being falsely accused by the Sicilians – whom he had freed – of plotting to become tyrant, they not only betrayed their host and companion, they actually became the very agents of his murder, standing by with weapons in hand as accomplices to his murderers.

Now, I neither pass over nor speak at length about the shameful and unholy nature of all this – it is and will be up to others to spin [**334b**] those tales in the future. But I will address what is said about the two Athenians, namely that they brought shame to their city. For I dare say that it was also an Athenian who did *not* betray that same man, even though he could have gotten money and many other honors. For it was not because of some vulgar affection that he became his friend, but through the communion shared in the course of the education of a free person, the only thing a sensible person should trust more than kinship of soul and body. So I do not believe that [**334c**] the two killers of Dion should be a cause for reproach for the city, as if they were men who had ever been held in any regard.

ταῦτα εἴρηται πάντα τῆς ξυμβουλῆς ἕνεκα τῶν Διωνείων φίλων καὶ ξυγγενῶν· ξυμβουλεύω δὲ δή τι πρὸς τούτοις τὴν αὐτὴν ξυμβουλὴν καὶ λόγον τὸν αὐτὸν λέγων ἤδη τρίτον τρίτοις ὑμῖν· μὴ δουλοῦσθαι Σικελίαν ὑπ' ἀνθρώποις, δεσπόταις, μηδὲ ἄλλην πόλιν, ὅ γ' ἐμὸς λόγος, ἀλλ' ὑπὸ νόμοις· οὔτε γὰρ τοῖς δουλουμένοις οὔτε τοῖς δουλωθεῖσιν ἄμεινον, [**334d**] αὐτοῖς καὶ παισὶ παίδων τε ἐκγόνοις, ἀλλ' ὀλέθριος πάντως ἡ πεῖρα, σμικρὰ δὲ καὶ ἀνελεύθερα ψυχῶν ἤθη τὰ τοιαῦτα ἁρπάζειν κέρδη φιλεῖ, οὐδὲν τῶν εἰς τὸν ἔπειτα καὶ εἰς τὸν παρόντα καιρὸν ἀγαθῶν καὶ δικαίων εἰδότα θείων τε καὶ ἀνθρωπίνων.

ταῦτα πρῶτον μὲν Δίωνα ἐγὼ ἐπεχείρησα πείθειν, δεύτερον δὲ Διονύσιον, τρίτους δὲ ὑμᾶς νῦν. καὶ μοι πείθεσθε Διὸς τρίτου σωτῆρος χάριν, εἶτα εἰς Διονύσιον βλέψαντες καὶ Δίωνα, ὧν ὁ μὲν μὴ πειθόμενος ζῇ τὰ νῦν [**334e**] οὐ καλῶς, ὁ δὲ πειθόμενος τέθνηκε καλῶς·τὸ γὰρ τῶν καλλίστων ἐφιέμενον αὑτῷ τε καὶ πόλει πάσχειν ὅ τι ἂν πάσχῃ πᾶν ὀρθὸν καὶ καλόν. οὔτε γὰρ πέφυκεν ἀθάνατος ἡμῶν οὐδείς, οὔτ' εἰ τῳ ξυμβαίη, γένοιτο ἂν εὐδαίμων, ὡς δοκεῖ τοῖς πολλοῖς. κακὸν γὰρ καὶ ἀγαθὸν οὐδὲν λόγου ἄξιόν [**335a**] ἐστι τοῖς ἀψύχοις, ἀλλ' ἢ μετὰ σώματος οὔσῃ ψυχῇ τοῦτο ξυμβήσεται ἑκάστῃ ἢ κεχωρισμένῃ.

All this I have said for the purpose of advising Dion's friends and relatives. But I will provide you with some advice in addition to this, and say for the third time something I've already told two others: neither Sicily nor any other polity should be enslaved to human masters, but rather to laws. This at any rate is my idea. For it is better neither for the enslavers nor for the enslaved themselves, [**334d**] their children, or their children's children. On the contrary, the attempt itself is totally destructive, and the dispositions of souls that are wont to snatch at such gains are small-minded and servile, and know nothing of the benefits conferred in the present and future by both divine and human justice and goodness.

I tried first to persuade Dion of these things, later Dionysius, and now, third of all, you. And for the sake of Zeus *Sōtēr* of the third libation,[6] listen to me, and look at Dionysius and Dion: the former did not listen to me and now lives [**334e**] poorly, while the latter did listen and died nobly. Indeed, it is altogether right and good for one who aspires to the best of things, both for himself and his city, to endure whatever he may endure, since none of us is immortal, nor, contrary to what many believe, would we be happy if we turned out to be. For the soul-less have nothing of either bad or good [**335a**] that is worth mentioning, while these things will be visited upon the soul whether it is with or separated from its body.

[6] On the order of libation offerings at banquets, the third of which would be dedicated to Zeus *Sōtēr* ("Zeus the Saviour"), see esp. D. Tolles, *The Banquet-Libations of the Greeks* (Ann Arbor: Edwards Brothers, 1943), 55-68.

πείθεσθαι δὲ ὄντως ἀεὶ χρὴ τοῖς παλαιοῖς τε καὶ ἱεροῖς λόγοις, οἳ δὴ μηνύουσιν ἡμῖν ἀθάνατον ψυχὴν εἶναι δικαστάς τε ἴσχειν καὶ τίνειν τὰς μεγίστας τιμωρίας, ὅταν τις ἀπαλλαχθῇ τοῦ σώματος. διὸ καὶ τὰ μεγάλα ἁμαρτήματα καὶ ἀδικήματα σμικρότερον εἶναι χρὴ νομίζειν κακὸν πάσχειν ἢ δρᾶσαι. ὧν ὁ φιλοχρήματος [**335b**] πένης τε ἀνὴρ τὴν ψυχὴν οὔτε ἀκούει, ἐάν τε ἀκούσῃ, καταγελῶν, ὡς οἴεται, πανταχόθεν ἀναιδῶς ἁρπάζει πᾶν ὅ τι περ ἂν οἴηται, καθάπερ θηρίον, φαγεῖν ἢ πιεῖν ἢ περὶ τὴν ἀνδραποδώδη καὶ ἀχάριστον, ἀφροδίσιον λεγομένην οὐκ ὀρθῶς, ἡδονὴν ἐκποριεῖν αὑτῷ τοὐμπίμπλασθαι, τυφλὸς ὢν καὶ οὐχ ὁρῶν, οἷα ξυνέπεται [τῶν ἁρπαγμάτων] ἀνοσιουργία, κακὸν ἡλίκον, ἀεὶ μετ' ἀδικήματος ἑκάστου, ἣν ἀναγκαῖον τῷ ἀδικήσαντι συνεφέλκειν ἐπί τε γῇ στρεφομένῳ καὶ ὑπὸ γῆς [**335c**] νοστήσαντι πορείαν ἄτιμόν τε καὶ ἀθλίαν πάντως πανταχῇ.

Δίωνα δὴ ἐγὼ λέγων ταῦτά τε καὶ ἄλλα τοιαῦτα ἔπειθον, καὶ τοῖς ἀποκτείνασιν ἐκεῖνον δικαιότατ' ἂν ὀργιζοίμην ἐγὼ τρόπον τινὰ ὁμοιότατα καὶ Διονυσίῳ· ἀμφότεροι γὰρ ἐμὲ καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους, ὡς ἔπος εἰπεῖν, ἅπαντας τὰ μέγιστα ἔβλαψαν ἀνθρώπους, οἱ μὲν τὸν βουλόμενον δικαιοσύνῃ χρῆσθαι διαφθείραντες, ὁ δὲ οὐδὲν ἐθελήσας χρήσασθαι δικαιοσύνῃ [**335d**] διὰ πάσης τῆς ἀρχῆς, μεγίστην δύναμιν ἔχων, ἐν ᾗ γενομένη φιλοσοφία τε καὶ δύναμις ὄντως ἐν ταὐτῷ διὰ πάντων ἀνθρώπων Ἑλλήνων τε καὶ βαρβάρων λάμψασ' ἂν ἱκανῶς δόξαν παρέστησε πᾶσι τὴν ἀληθῆ, ὡς οὐκ ἄν ποτε γένοιτο εὐδαίμων οὔτε πόλις οὔτ' ἀνὴρ οὐδείς ὃς ἂν μὴ μετὰ φρονήσεως ὑπὸ δικαιοσύνῃ διαγάγῃ τὸν βίον, ἤτοι ἐν αὑτῷ κεκτημένος ἢ ὁσίων ἀνδρῶν ἀρχόντων ἐν ἤθεσι τραφείς τε καὶ παιδευθεὶς [**335e**] ἐνδίκως.

We must truly trust in the ancient and sacred precepts that reveal to us that a soul is immortal, that it contains within it judges, and that it pays the harshest penalties whenever it is set free from its body. Therefore, we must also believe that it is a lesser evil to suffer the greatest wrongs and injustices than it is to commit them, a notion that the man who is money-loving [**335b**] but soul-poor either does not hear, or if he does hear it he mocks it – so he thinks – all the while snatching from every corner, like a wild animal, whatever he intends to eat or drink, or whatever slavish and graceless pleasure, falsely called an object of love, he wishes to provide himself and gorge upon. He is blind and does not see the company that such wickedness keeps, an abomination ever equal to each act of injustice which the wrongdoer must drag along with himself as he wanders upon the earth and when he goes back below the earth [**335c**] on a journey that is sordid and miserable at every turn.

Now, I persuaded Dion when I explained these and other such things to him, and so I am justifiably angry with those who killed him, and likewise with Dionysius. For they all caused the gravest harm to me and to practically all of humanity: the murderers by destroying a person who wished to advance justice, Dionysius by having no desire whatsoever to advance justice [**335d**] throughout his entire kingdom. And this despite the fact that he had the utmost power in a place where, if philosophy and power had truly been united within the same individual, it would have shone forth through all peoples, Greeks and Barbarians alike, and demonstrated to everyone the truth of the idea that no city or man can ever be happy except by leading a life based on wisdom and subordinate to justice, regardless of whether this capacity is acquired independently or through a proper upbringing and education that conforms to the morals of men who are conscientious [**335e**] rulers.

ταῦτα μὲν Διονύσιος ἔβλαψε· τὰ δὲ ἄλλα σμικρὰ ἂν εἴη πρὸς ταῦτά μοι βλάβη. ὁ δὲ Δίωνα ἀποκτείνας οὐκ οἶδε ταὐτὸν ἐξειργασμένος τούτῳ. Δίωνα γὰρ ἐγὼ σαφῶς οἶδα, ὡς οἷόν τε περὶ ἀνθρώπων ἄνθρωπον διισχυρίζεσθαι, ὅτι τὴν ἀρχὴν εἰ κατέσχεν, ὡς οὐκ ἄν ποτε ἐπ' ἄλλο γε [**336a**] σχῆμα ἀρχῆς ἐτράπετο ἢ ἐπὶ τὸ Συρακούσας μὲν πρῶτον τὴν πατρίδα τὴν ἑαυτοῦ, ἐπεὶ τὴν δουλείαν αὐτῆς ἀπήλλαξε [καὶ] φαιδρύνας ἐλευθερίῳ δ' ἐν σχήματι κατέστησε, τὸ μετὰ τοῦτ' ἂν πάσῃ μηχανῇ ἐκόσμησε νόμοις τοῖς προσήκουσί τε καὶ ἀρίστοις τοὺς πολίτας, τό τε ἐφεξῆς τούτοις προὐθυμεῖτ' ἂν πρᾶξαι, πᾶσαν Σικελίαν κατοικίζειν καὶ ἐλευθέραν ἀπὸ τῶν βαρβάρων ποιεῖν, τοὺς μὲν ἐκβάλλων, τοὺς δὲ χειρούμενος ῥᾷον Ἱέρωνος· τούτων δ' αὖ γενομένων δι' ἀνδρὸς [**336b**] δικαίου τε καὶ ἀνδρείου καὶ σώφρονος καὶ φιλοσόφου τὴν αὐτὴν ἀρετῆς ἂν πέρι γενέσθαι δόξαν τοῖς πολλοῖς ἥπερ ἄν, εἰ Διονύσιος ἐπείσθη, ‹πάντα› παρὰ πᾶσιν ἂν ὡς ἔπος εἰπεῖν ἀνθρώποις ἀπέσωσε γενομένη.

νῦν δὲ ἤ πού τις δαίμων ἤ τις ἀλιτήριος ἐμπεσὼν ἀνομίᾳ καὶ ἀθεότητι καὶ τὸ μέγιστον τόλμαις ἀμαθίας, ἐξ ἧς πάντα κακὰ πᾶσιν ἐρρίζωται καὶ βλαστάνει καὶ εἰς ὕστερον ἀποτελεῖ καρπὸν τοῖς γεννήσασι πικρότατον, αὕτη πάντα τὸ δεύτερον ἀνέτρεψέ τε καὶ [**336c**] ἀπώλεσε.

νῦν δὲ δὴ εὐφημῶμεν χάριν οἰωνοῦ τὸ τρίτον. ὅμως δὲ μιμεῖσθαι μὲν συμβουλεύω Δίωνα ὑμῖν τοῖς φίλοις τήν τε τῆς πατρίδος εὔνοιαν καὶ τὴν τῆς τροφῆς σώφρονα δίαιταν, ἐπὶ λῳόνων δὲ ὀρνίθων τὰς ἐκείνου βουλήσεις πειρᾶσθαι ἀποτελεῖν· αἳ δὲ ἦσαν, ἀκηκόατε παρ' ἐμοῦ σαφῶς·

This is the damage that Dionysius has done, and compared to this, the rest would be but a small injury for me. The man who killed Dion did just as much harm as Dionysius, though he does not know it. For I know well, to the extent that one person can vouch for another, that if Dion had come into power, he would never have molded the city in any form [**336a**] other than this: first of all, after he had brought joy to Syracuse, his own fatherland, by delivering it from slavery and fashioning it in the form of freedom, he would have used any means necessary to equip it with laws that were the best and most beneficial to the citizens; and after this he would have set his sights on settling all of Sicily and rendering it free from the barbarians, pushing some of them out, subduing others more easily than Hieron did. Furthermore, if all these things had been done by a man [**336b**] who was just, courageous, prudent, and a philosopher, virtue would have acquired the same reputation among most people as it would have among practically everyone, if Dionysius had been persuaded, and all would have been saved.

In the end, however, some deity or, perhaps, some avenging spirit barged in bringing lawlessness, godlessness, and above all the insolence of ignorance out of which all evil sets roots and blossoms and finally produces the most bitter of fruits for those who have sown them, and this upended and ruined everything for the [**336c**] second time.

But now, so as not to jinx it,[7] let us speak this third time in auspicious terms. I still advise you to emulate Dion and his goodwill towards his fatherland and his prudent manner of living, and to try and fulfill under better auspices those plans of his that you have now heard clearly from me.

[7] Special thanks to Tony Leyh for providing this excellent suggestion for the translation of οἰωνοῦ, and for making me aware of the ornithological aspects shared by both the English and Greek terms.

τὸν δὲ μὴ δυνάμενον ὑμῶν Δωριστὶ ζῆν κατὰ τὰ [**336d**] πάτρια, διώκοντα δὲ τόν τε τῶν Δίωνος σφαγέων καὶ τὸν Σικελικὸν βίον, μήτε παρακαλεῖν μήτε οἴεσθαι πιστὸν ἄν τι καὶ ὑγιὲς πρᾶξαί ποτε· τοὺς δὲ ἄλλους παρακαλεῖν ἐπὶ πάσης Σικελίας κατοικισμόν τε καὶ ἰσονομίαν ἔκ τε αὐτῆς Σικελίας καὶ ἐκ Πελοποννήσου ξυμπάσης, φοβεῖσθαι δὲ μηδὲ Ἀθήνας· εἰσὶ γὰρ καὶ ἐκεῖ πάντων ἀνθρώπων διαφέροντες πρὸς ἀρετὴν ξενοφόνων τε ἀνδρῶν μισοῦντες τόλμας

εἰ δ' οὖν ταῦτα μὲν ὕστερα γένοιτ' ἄν, κατεπείγουσι δὲ ὑμᾶς αἱ τῶν [**336e**] στάσεων πολλαὶ καὶ παντοδαπαὶ φυόμεναι ἑκάστης ἡμέρας διαφοραί, εἰδέναι μέν που χρὴ πάντα τινὰ ἄνδρα, ᾧ καὶ βραχὺ δόξης ὀρθῆς μετέδωκε θεία τις τύχη, ὡς οὐκ ἔστι παῦλα κακῶν τοῖς στασιάσασι, πρὶν ἂν οἱ κρατήσαντες μάχαις καὶ ἐκβολαῖς ἀνθρώπων καὶ σφαγαῖς μνησικακοῦντες [**337a**] καὶ ἐπὶ τιμωρίας παύσωνται τρεπόμενοι τῶν ἐχθρῶν, ἐγκρατεῖς δὲ ὄντες αὑτῶν, θέμενοι νόμους κοινοὺς μηδὲν μᾶλλον πρὸς ἡδονὴν αὑτοῖς ἢ τοῖς ἡττηθεῖσι κειμένους, ἀναγκάσωσιν αὐτοὺς χρῆσθαι τοῖς νόμοις διτταῖς οὔσαις ἀνάγκαις, αἰδοῖ καὶ φόβῳ, φόβῳ μὲν διὰ τὸ κρείττους αὐτῶν εἶναι δεικνύντες τὴν βίαν, αἰδοῖ δὲ αὖ διὰ τὸ κρείττους φαίνεσθαι περί τε τὰς ἡδονὰς καὶ τοῖς νόμοις μᾶλλον ἐθέλοντές τε καὶ δυνάμενοι δουλεύειν. ἄλλως δὲ οὐκ ἔστιν ὡς ἄν ποτε κακῶν λήξαι [**337b**] πόλις ἐν αὑτῇ στασιάσασα, ἀλλὰ στάσεις καὶ ἔχθραι καὶ μίση καὶ ἀπιστίαι ταῖς οὕτω διατεθείσαις πόλεσιν αὐταῖς πρὸς αὑτὰς ἀεὶ γίγνεσθαι φιλεῖ.

And when it comes to those who are unable to live according to [**336d**] your ancestral ways in the Dorian fashion, those who aspire to the way of life of the Sicilians, such as Dion's murderers, I urge you neither to send for people such as these nor to think that they could ever do anything reasonable or dependable. Instead, to assist in the settlement of all of Sicily and the establishment of equality under the law, you should send for other men from both Sicily itself and from the entire Peloponnese; nor should you shy away from summoning men from Athens, for there too one may find individuals who surpass all others in virtue and despise the insolence of men who murder their friends.

If, however, these things should only occur later, and if you feel upon you the strain of the [**336e**] many and constant disagreements of ever-flourishing factions, then every man upon whom some divine fortune has bestowed a small measure of proper thinking must in some way understand that those who engage in civil wars will never see an end to their problems until the people in power stop perpetuating malice with fighting, banishments, and slaughter, [**337a**] and refrain from punishing their enemies. When they exercise restraint, and when they have passed laws that are impartial and established no more for their own satisfaction than for the defeated parties, then they will force others to regard the laws with these two crucial attitudes: respect and fear. Fear of men who show themselves to be superior when it comes to force; respect because those same men appear to be stronger than their own pleasures and because they are willing and able to subjugate themselves to the laws. Otherwise, there is no city that will ever put an end to its troubles [**337b**] when it is at war with itself. On the contrary, discord, hostility, loathing, and mistrust tend to always exist in cities that are set up along lines of internal antagonisms.

τοὺς δὴ κρατήσαντας ἀεὶ χρή, ὅτανπερ ἐπιθυμήσωσι σωτηρίας, αὐτοὺς ἐν αὑτοῖς ἄνδρας προκρῖναι τῶν Ἑλλήνων οὓς ἂν πυνθάνωνται ἀρίστους ὄντας, πρῶτον μὲν γέροντας, καὶ παῖδας καὶ γυναῖκας κεκτημένους οἴκοι καὶ προγόνους αὑτῶν ὅ τι μάλιστα πολλούς τε καὶ ὀνομαστοὺς καὶ κτῆσιν κεκτημένους πάντας [**337c**] ἱκανήν· ἀριθμὸν δὲ εἶναι μυριάνδρῳ πόλει πεντήκοντα ἱκανοὶ τοιοῦτοι. τούτους δὲ δεήσεσι καὶ τιμαῖς ὅ τι μεγίσταις οἴκοθεν μεταπέμπεσθαι, μεταπεμψαμένους δὲ ὁμόσαντας δεῖσθαι καὶ κελεύειν θεῖναι νόμους, μήτε νικήσασι μήτε νικηθεῖσι νέμειν πλέον, τὸ δὲ ἴσον καὶ κοινὸν πάσῃ τῇ πόλει.

τεθέντων δὲ τῶν νόμων ἐν τούτῳ δὴ τὰ πάντα ἐστίν. ἂν μὲν γὰρ οἱ νενικηκότες ἥττους αὑτοὺς τῶν νόμων [**337d**] μᾶλλον τῶν νενικημένων παρέχωνται, πάντ' ἔσται σωτηρίας τε καὶ εὐδαιμονίας μεστὰ καὶ πάντων κακῶν ἀποφυγή· εἰ δὲ μή, μήτ' ἐμὲ μήτ' ἄλλον κοινωνὸν παρακαλεῖν ἐπὶ τὸν μὴ πειθόμενον τοῖς νῦν ἐπεσταλμένοις. ταῦτα γάρ ἐστιν ἀδελφὰ ὧν τε Δίων ὧν τ' ἐγὼ ἐπεχειρήσαμεν Συρακούσαις εὖ φρονοῦντες συμπρᾶξαι, δεύτερα μήν· πρῶτα δ' ἦν ἃ τὸ πρῶτον ἐπεχειρήθη μετ' αὐτοῦ Διονυσίου πραχθῆναι πᾶσι κοινὰ ἀγαθά, τύχη δέ τις ἀνθρώπων κρείττων διεφόρησε. [**337e**] τὰ δὲ νῦν ὑμεῖς πειρᾶσθε εὐτυχέστερον αὐτὰ ἀγαθῇ πρᾶξαι μοίρᾳ καὶ θείᾳ τινὶ τύχῃ.

To be sure, whenever they aspire towards preservation, those in power must select from among themselves whichever men of Greek origin they discover are the best. First of all they should find men who are old, and who have wives and children at home and whose ancestors are as numerous and renowned as possible, and they should all be men of [**337c**] adequate means – fifty such men should be sufficient for a city of ten-thousand people. They should summon these men from their homes with pleas and as many honors as possible, and after they have been summoned and oaths have been sworn, they should urge and implore them to set laws, and to cater no more to either the victors or the vanquished, but rather in an equal and impartial manner to the entire city.

Once the laws have been established, everything will depend on the following: if the victors yield to the laws [**337d**] more than the vanquished do, then a refuge from all evil and a full share of salvation and happiness will be provided. If they do not, however, you should not call on either myself or anyone else to deal with those who do not follow the instructions I have now given. For this is closely related to what Dion and I both, out of care for Syracuse, attempted to do, and it is the second-best course of action. The best is what we tried to do at first with Dionysius himself, namely to confer a set of benefits for everyone alike. But fortune, a force far stronger than humans, crushed that attempt. [**337e**] And now you all must try to achieve this with greater success, aided by good luck and some divine fortune.

ξυμβουλὴ μὲν δὴ καὶ ἐπιστολὴ εἰρήσθω καὶ ἡ παρὰ Διονύσιον ἐμὴ προτέρα ἄφιξις· ἡ δὲ δὴ ὑστέρα πορεία τε καὶ πλοῦς ὡς εἰκότως τε ἅμα καὶ ἐμμελῶς γέγονεν, ᾧ μέλει ἀκούειν ἔξεστι τὸ μετὰ τοῦτο. ὁ μὲν γὰρ δὴ πρῶτος χρόνος [**338a**] τῆς ἐν Σικελίᾳ διατριβῆς μοι διεπεράνθη, καθάπερ εἶπον, πρὶν συμβουλεύειν τοῖς οἰκείοις καὶ ἑταίροις τοῖς περὶ Δίωνα· τὸ μετ' ἐκεῖνα δ' οὖν ἔπεισα ὅπῃ δή ποτ' ἐδυνάμην Διονύσιον ἀφεῖναί με, εἰρήνης δὲ γενομένης, ἦν γὰρ τότε πόλεμος ἐν Σικελίᾳ ξυνωμολογήσαμεν ἀμφότεροι, Διονύσιος μὲν [ἔφη] μεταπέμψεσθαι Δίωνα καὶ ἐμὲ πάλιν καταστησάμενος τὰ περὶ τὴν ἀρχὴν ἀσφαλέστερον ἑαυτῷ, Δίωνα δὲ ἠξίου [**338b**] διανοεῖσθαι μὴ φυγὴν αὑτῷ γεγονέναι τότε, μετάστασιν δέ· ἐγὼ δ' ἤξειν ὡμολόγησα ἐπὶ τούτοις τοῖς λόγοις. γενομένης δὲ εἰρήνης μετεπέμπετ' ἐμέ, Δίωνα δὲ ἐπισχεῖν ἔτι ἐνιαυτὸν ἐδεῖτο, ἐμὲ δὲ ἥκειν ἐκ παντὸς τρόπου ἠξίου. Δίων μὲν οὖν ἐκέλευέ τέ με πλεῖν καὶ ἐδεῖτο· καὶ γὰρ δὴ λόγος ἐχώρει πολὺς ἐκ Σικελίας ὡς Διονύσιος θαυμαστῶς φιλοσοφίας ἐν ἐπιθυμίᾳ πάλιν εἴη γεγονὼς τὰ νῦν, ὅθεν ὁ Δίων συντεταμένως ἐδεῖτο ἡμῶν τῇ μεταπέμψει μὴ ἀπειθεῖν.

ἐγὼ δὲ ἤδη μέν που [**338c**] κατὰ τὴν φιλοσοφίαν τοῖς νέοις πολλὰ τοιαῦτα γιγνόμενα, ὅμως δ' οὖν ἀσφαλέστερόν μοι ἔδοξε χαίρειν τότε γε πολλὰ καὶ Δίωνα καὶ Διονύσιον ἐᾷν, καὶ ἀπηχθόμην ἀμφοῖν ἀποκρινάμενος ὅτι γέρων τε εἴην καὶ κατὰ τὰς ὁμολογίας οὐδὲν γίγνοιτο τῶν τὰ νῦν πραττομένων.

ἔοικε δὴ τὸ μετὰ τοῦτο Ἀρχύτης τε παρὰ Διονύσιον ἀφικέσθαι—, ἐγὼ γὰρ πρὶν ἀπιέναι ξενίαν καὶ φιλίαν Ἀρχύτῃ καὶ τοῖς ἐν [**338d**] Τάραντι καὶ Διονυσίῳ ποιήσας ἀπέπλεον—, ἄλλοι τέ τινες ἐν Συρακούσαις ἦσαν Δίωνός τε ἄττα διακηκοότες καὶ τούτων τινὲς ἄλλοι, παρακουσμάτων τινῶν ἔμμεστοι τῶν κατὰ φιλοσοφίαν· οἳ δοκοῦσί μοι Διονυσίῳ πειρᾶσθαι διαλέγεσθαι πῶς περὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα, ὡς Διονυσίου πάντα διακηκοότος ὅσα διενοούμην ἐγώ.

This advice and message, along with the earlier one about my first arrival at Dionysius's court, should suffice. But after this, anyone who is so inclined can hear about my later journey across the sea, and how fitting and reasonable it was. As I said, I have told the whole story of the first part [**338a**] of my sojourn in Sicily, the period before I advised Dion's friends and companions. After that I attempted to persuade Dionysius, by whatever means possible, to let me go. Since there was a war in Sicily at the time, we both agreed that Dionysius would call me and Dion back when there was peace and when he had made things more secure for himself in his kingdom, and he asked Dion [**338b**] to conceive of his situation not so much as an exile, but rather as a relocation. I agreed that I would come under these terms, and when peace had come, Dionysius summoned me, but he asked Dion to wait for another year, even though he insisted that I come anyway. Dion, for his part, urged and implored me to set sail, for reports kept arriving from Sicily that Dionysius had once again become tremendously infatuated with philosophy. Dion therefore eagerly begged me not to reject Dionysius's summons.

For my part, I knew that [**338c**] philosophy has often had such an effect on young men, but all the same I thought it safer by far to forget about both Dion and Dionysius, and I irritated both of them when I responded that I was old and that the current situation did not meet the standards of the agreement at all.

It appears that after this, Archytas arrived at Dionysius's court – before sailing away I had managed to forge a bond of friendship and hospitality between Archytas and the people of [**338d**] Tarentum and Dionysius – and that there were some others in Syracuse who had studied some under Dion, and still others who had studied under these and who were thus quite full of misconceptions about philosophy; I believe that they were trying to have discussions with Dionysius on such topics, as if Dionysius had thoroughly absorbed all my thinking.

ὁ δὲ οὔτε ἄλλως ἐστὶν ἀφυὴς πρὸς τὴν τοῦ μανθάνειν δύναμιν φιλότιμός τε θαυμαστῶς· ἤρεσκέ τε οὖν ἴσως αὐτῷ τὰ λεγόμενα ᾐσχύνετό τε φανερὸς γιγνόμενος [**338e**] οὐδὲν ἀκηκοὼς ὅτ' ἐπεδήμουν ἐγώ, ὅθεν ἅμα μὲν εἰς ἐπιθυμίαν ἦει τοῦ διακοῦσαι ἐναργέστερον, ἅμα δ' ἡ φιλοτιμία κατήπειγεν αὐτόν· δι' ἃ δὲ οὐκ ἤκουσεν ἐν τῇ πρόσθεν ἐπιδημίᾳ, διεξήλθομεν ἐν τοῖς ἄνω ῥηθεῖσι νυν δὴ λόγοις. ἐπειδὴ οὖν οἱκαδέ τ' ἐσώθην καὶ καλοῦντος τὸ δεύτερον ἀπηρνήθην, καθάπερ εἶπον νυν δή, δοκεῖ μοι Διονύσιος παντάπασι φιλοτιμηθῆναι μή ποτέ τισι δόξαιμι καταφρονῶν [**339a**] αὐτοῦ τῆς φύσεώς τε καὶ ἕξεως ἅμα καὶ τῆς διαίτης ἔμπειρος γεγονώς, οὐκέτ' ἐθέλειν δυσχεραίνων παρ' αὐτὸν ἀφικνεῖσθαι.

δίκαιος δὴ λέγειν εἰμὶ τἀληθὲς καὶ ὑπομένειν, εἴ τις ἄρα τὰ γεγονότα ἀκούσας καταφρονήσει τῆς ἐμῆς φιλοσοφίας, τὸν τύραννον δὲ ἡγήσεται νοῦν ἔχειν. ἔπεμψε μὲν γὰρ δὴ Διονύσιος τρίτον ἐπ' ἐμὲ τριήρη ῥᾳστώνης ἕνεκα τῆς πορείας, ἔπεμψε δὲ Ἀρχέδημον, ὃν ἡγεῖτό με τῶν ἐν [**339b**] Σικελίᾳ περὶ πλείστου ποιεῖσθαι, τῶν Ἀρχύτῃ ξυγγεγονότων ἕνα, καὶ ἄλλους γνωρίμους τῶν ἐν Σικελίᾳ· οὗτοι δὲ ἡμῖν ἤγγελλον πάντες τὸν αὐτὸν λόγον, ὡς θαυμαστὸν ὅσον Διονύσιος ἐπιδεδωκὼς εἴη πρὸς φιλοσοφίαν.

ἔπεμψε δὲ ἐπιστολὴν πάνυ μακράν, εἰδὼς ὡς πρὸς Δίωνα διεκείμην καὶ τὴν αὖ Δίωνος προθυμίαν τοῦ ἐμὲ πλεῖν καὶ εἰς Συρακούσας ἐλθεῖν· πρὸς γὰρ δὴ πάντα ταῦτα ἦν παρεσκευασμένη τὴν ἀρχὴν ἔχουσα ἡ ἐπιστολή, τῇδέ πῃ φράζουσαν· "Διονύσιος [**339c**] Πλάτωνι"· τὰ νόμιμα ἐπὶ τούτοις εἰπὼν οὐδὲν τὸ μετὰ τοῦτο εἶπε πρότερον ἢ ὡς "ἂν εἰς Σικελίαν πεισθεὶς ὑφ' ἡμῶν ἔλθῃς τὰ νῦν, πρῶτον μέν σοι τὰ περὶ Δίωνα ὑπάρξει ταύτῃ γιγνόμενα ὅπῃπερ ἂν αὐτὸς ἐθέλῃς· θελήσεις δὲ οἶδ' ὅτι τὰ μέτρια, καὶ ἐγὼ συγχωρήσομαι· εἰ δὲ μή, οὐδέν σοι τῶν περὶ Δίωνα ἔξει πραγμάτων οὔτε περὶ τἆλλα οὔτε περὶ αὐτὸν κατὰ νοῦν γιγνόμενα." ταῦθ' οὕτως εἶπε, τἆλλα δὲ [**339d**] μακρὰ ἂν εἴη καὶ ἄνευ καιροῦ λεγόμενα.

Now, Dionysius is by no means bereft of a natural faculty for learning, and he is tremendously ambitious. As such, he was perhaps pleased by these discussions, and also ashamed when it became obvious [**338e**] that he had not studied at all during my visit. As a result, he came around to a desire to study more attentively, while at the same time his ambition pushed him to do so as well. (I have already explained, in my account above, why he had not paid attention during my earlier visit.) So when I had reached the safety of my home and rejected his second invitation – which I also explained above – it seems Dionysius became obsessed with making sure that no one believe that, once I had gotten to know his lifestyle, [**339a**] I regarded his natural abilities and his habits with disdain, and that in my disgust I was no longer willing to come to him.

It is only fair that I tell the truth and to be patient if anyone who has just heard these accounts should look down on my philosophy and believe instead that it was the tyrant who was sensible. In any case, this third time Dionysius sent for me with a trireme, so as to make the voyage easy, and he also sent Archedemus, one of Archytas's pupils, whom he thought I regarded most highly of everyone in [**339b**] Sicily, along with some other acquaintances of mine from there. All these men brought to me the same report, namely that Dionysius had progressed quite impressively with regards to philosophy.

He also sent a very long letter, knowing how I felt about Dion and about Dion's own desire for me to make the voyage and come to Syracuse. To be sure, his letter was prepared with an eye to all these things, having as it did a preface that went something like this: "Dionysius [**339c**] to Plato" – after which he said all the customary things but nothing else before – "if you should now be persuaded to come to me in Sicily, first and foremost Dion's situation will be arranged in whatever manner you wish, for I know that your wishes will be reasonable, and that I will agree to them. Otherwise, however, none of Dion's affairs will work out in the way that you want, neither as regards the person himself nor anything else you might have in mind." So he said, and the rest [**339d**] is too long and pointless to repeat.

ἐπιστολαὶ δὲ ἄλλαι ἐφοίτων παρά τε Ἀρχύτου καὶ τῶν ἐν Τάραντι, τήν τε φιλοσοφίαν ἐγκωμιάζουσαι τὴν Διονυσίου καὶ ὅτι, ἂν μὴ ἀφίκωμαι νῦν, τὴν πρὸς Διονύσιον αὐτοῖς γενομένην φιλίαν δι' ἐμοῦ οὐ σμικρὰν οὖσαν πρὸς τὰ πολιτικὰ παντάπασι διαβαλοίην. ταύτης δὴ τοιαύτης γενομένης ἐν τῷ τότε χρόνῳ τῆς μεταπέμψεως, τῶν μὲν ἐκ Σικελίας τε καὶ Ἰταλίας ἑλκόντων, τῶν δὲ Ἀθήνηθεν ἀτεχνῶς μετὰ δεήσεως οἷον [**339e**] ἐξωθούντων με, καὶ πάλιν ὁ λόγος ἦκεν ὁ αὐτός, τὸ μὴ δεῖν προδοῦναι Δίωνα μηδὲ τοὺς ἐν Τάραντι ξένους τε καὶ ἑταίρους· αὐτῷ δέ μοι ὑπῆν ὡς οὐδὲν θαυμαστὸν νέον ἄνθρωπον παρακούοντα ἀξίων λόγου πραγμάτων, εὐμαθῆ, πρὸς ἔρωτα ἐλθεῖν τοῦ βελτίστου βίου· δεῖν οὖν αὐτὸ ἐξελέγξαι σαφῶς, ὁποτέρως ποτὲ ἄρα σχοίη, καὶ τοῦτ' αὐτὸ μηδαμῇ προδοῦναι μηδ' ἐμὲ τὸν αἴτιον γενέσθαι τηλικούτου ἀληθῶς ὀνείδους, [**340a**] εἴπερ ὄντως εἴη τῳ ταῦτα λελεγμένα.

πορεύομαι δὴ τῷ λογισμῷ τούτῳ κατακαλυψάμενος, πολλὰ δεδιὼς μαντευόμενός τε οὐ πάνυ καλῶς, ὡς ἔοικεν. ἐλθὼν δ' οὖν τὸ τρίτον τῷ σωτῆρι τοῦτό γε οὖν ἔπραξα ὄντως· ἐσώθην γάρ τοι πάλιν εὐτυχῶς, καὶ τούτων γε μετὰ θεὸν Διονυσίῳ χάριν εἰδέναι χρεών, ὅτι πολλῶν βουληθέντων ἀπολέσαι με διεκώλυσε καὶ ἔδωκέ τι μέρος αἰδοῖ τῶν περὶ ἐμὲ πραγμάτων.

[**340b**] ἐπειδὴ δὲ ἀφικόμην, ᾤμην τούτου πρῶτον ἔλεγχον δεῖν λαβεῖν, πότερον ὄντως εἴη Διονύσιος ἐξημμένος ὑπὸ φιλοσοφίας ὥσπερ πυρός, ἢ μάτην ὁ πολὺς οὗτος ἔλθοι λόγος Ἀθήναζε. ἔστι δή τις τρόπος τοῦ περὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα πεῖραν λαμβάνειν οὐκ ἀγεννὴς ἀλλ' ὄντως τυράννοις πρέπων, ἄλλως τε καὶ τοῖς τῶν παρακουσμάτων μεστοῖς, ὃ δὴ κἀγὼ Διονύσιον εὐθὺς ἐλθὼν ᾐσθόμην καὶ μάλα πεπονθότα.

Other letters also poured in, both from Archytas and others in Tarentum, extolling Dionysius's love of wisdom and saying that, if I didn't come now, I would scuttle their friendship with Dionysius, which I had arranged and which was no trivial thing when it came to political matters. Such were the summons that I received at that time, and with the Sicilians and Italians drawing me in, and with the Athenians basically driving me out with their harassment, [**339e**] so to speak, the same consideration kept coming back to me: that I shouldn't betray Dion or my friends and companions in Tarentum. It also occurred to me that it did not defy belief that a sharp young man might hear snatches of discussions of lofty subjects and become enamored of the best sort of life, and that it was thus necessary to definitively investigate how these things stood, and to neither betray this ideal nor to be responsible for something truly disgraceful, [**340a**] if in fact things really were as they said.

After casting this veil of reasoning over myself I set out, although I was quite fearful and had a sensation that was not altogether good, as was appropriate. In any case, in coming I truly experienced this "third one for the savior," for I was fortunate to get back safely, and for this I must, after god, acknowledge a debt of gratitude to Dionysius, for although there were many who wished to destroy me, he prevented this from happening and granted some measure of respect to our dealings.

[**340b**] When I arrived, I thought I should first of all conduct an evaluation as to whether or not philosophy had truly lit a fire under Dionysius, or whether that great trail of reports that had come to Athens was false. Now, there is a certain way of trying to conduct such an evaluation that is not sordid, but in fact quite suitable for tyrants, particularly for ones that are full of misconceptions, which, when I arrived, I immediately perceived was the case with Dionysius.

δεικνύναι δὴ δεῖ τοῖς τοιούτοις ὅ τι ἔστι πᾶν τὸ πρᾶγμα οἷόν τε [**340c**] καὶ δι' ὅσων πραγμάτων καὶ ὅσον πόνον ἔχει. ὁ γὰρ ἀκούσας, ἐὰν μὲν ὄντως ᾖ φιλόσοφος οἰκεῖός τε καὶ ἄξιος τοῦ πράγματος θεῖος ὤν, ὁδόν τε ἡγεῖται θαυμαστὴν ἀκηκοέναι ξυντατέον τε εἶναι νῦν καὶ οὐ βιωτὸν ἄλλως ποιοῦντι· μετὰ τοῦτο δὴ ξυντείνας αὑτόν τε καὶ τὸν ἡγούμενον τὴν ὁδὸν οὐκ ἀνίησι πρὶν ἂν ἢ τέλος ἐπιθῇ πᾶσι ἢ λάβῃ δύναμιν ὥστε αὐτὸς αὑτὸν χωρὶς τοῦ δείξαντος μὴ ἀδύνατος εἶναι ποδηγεῖν.

[**340d**] ταύτῃ καὶ κατὰ ταῦτα διανοηθεὶς ὁ τοιοῦτος ζῇ, πράττων μὲν ἐν αἷς τισὶν ἂν ᾖ πράξεσι, παρὰ πάντα δὲ ἀεὶ φιλοσοφίας ἐχόμενος καὶ τροφῆς τῆς καθ' ἡμέραν, ἥτις ἂν αὐτὸν μάλιστα εὐμαθῆ τε καὶ μνήμονα καὶ λογίζεσθαι δυνατὸν ἐν αὑτῷ νήφοντα ἀπεργάζηται· τὴν δὲ ἐναντίαν ταύτῃ μισῶν διατελεῖ. οἱ δὲ ὄντως μὲν μὴ φιλόσοφοι, δόξαις δ' ἐπικεχρωσμένοι, καθάπερ οἱ τὰ σώματα ὑπὸ τοῦ ἡλίου ἐπικεκαυμένοι, ἰδόντες τε ὅσα μαθήματά ἐστι καὶ ὁ πόνος [**340e**] ἡλίκος καὶ δίαιτα ἡ καθ' ἡμέραν ὡς πρέπουσα ἡ κοσμία τῷ πράγματι, χαλεπὸν ἡγησάμενοι καὶ ἀδύνατον αὑτοῖς, οὔτε δὴ [**341a**] ἐπιτηδεύειν δυνατοὶ γίγνονται· ἔνιοι δὲ αὐτῶν πείθουσιν αὑτοὺς ὡς ἱκανῶς ἀκηκοότες εἰσὶ τὸ ὅλον καὶ οὐδὲν ἔτι δέονταί τινων πραγμάτων. ἡ μὲν δὴ πεῖρα αὕτη γίγνεται ἡ σαφής τε καὶ ἀσφαλεστάτη πρὸς τοὺς τρυφῶντάς τε καὶ ἀδυνάτους διαπονεῖν, ὡς μηδέποτε βαλεῖν ἐν αἰτίᾳ τὸν δεικνύντα ἀλλ' αὐτὸν αὑτόν, μὴ δυνάμενον πάντα τὰ πρόσφορα ἐπιτηδεύειν τῷ πράγματι.

Basically, it is necessary to show such individuals what the entire matter consists of [**340c**] and how substantial it is, how much work it involves, and how many things it entails. For if the person is truly a lover of philosophy and is suited to and worthy of the endeavor and is inspired by the gods, then upon hearing all this he will believe the path spoken of is a marvelous one, that he must direct all his energy towards it, and that to do otherwise would not be a worthwhile existence. And in fact, after this he applies all of his own energy and that of his guide, and he does not let up until he either fulfills his purpose, or until he acquires enough power that he is able to find his way without his guide.

[**340d**] Such a person lives in this way and according to these principles in whatever business he happens to be engaged, always clinging first and foremost to philosophy and to a daily regimen that makes him sharpest, most mindful, and most able to reason with himself in a sober manner, and he consistently despises the opposite way of life. On the other hand, those who are not true lovers of philosophy, but who are merely colored by certain notions like those who have been burned by the sun – when they see how much there is to learn, what sort of work [**340e**] there is to do, and that the daily lifestyle that suits the endeavor is a moderate one, they consider the task difficult, even [**341a**] impossible for themselves. And in the end, they are not able to pursue it, and some of them convince themselves that they have learned enough about the whole thing and need know nothing more about certain matters. The experiment itself thus becomes a clear and most reliable evaluation of people who are pampered and unable to work hard, since they can never cast blame upon their guide, rather than upon themselves personally, when they are not able to fully apply themselves to the matter.

οὕτω δὴ καὶ Διονυσίῳ τότ' ἐρρήθη τὰ ῥηθέντα. πάντα μὲν οὖν οὔτ' ἐγὼ διεξῆλθον οὔτε **[341b]** Διονύσιος ἐδεῖτο· πολλὰ γὰρ αὐτὸς καὶ τὰ μέγιστα εἰδέναι τε καὶ ἱκανῶς ἔχειν προσεποιεῖτο διὰ τὰς ὑπὸ τῶν ἄλλων παρακοάς. ὕστερον δὲ καὶ ἀκούω γεγραφέναι αὐτὸν περὶ ὧν τότε ἤκουσε, συνθέντα ὡς αὑτοῦ τέχνην, οὐδὲν τῶν αὐτῶν ὧν ἀκούοι· οἶδα δὲ οὐδὲν τούτων· ἄλλους μέν τινας οἶδα γεγραφότας περὶ τῶν αὐτῶν τούτων· οἵτινες δέ, οὐδ' αὐτοὶ αὑτούς. τοσόνδε γε μὴν περὶ πάντων ἔχω φράζειν τῶν γεγραφότων **[341c]** καὶ γραψόντων, ὅσοι φασὶν εἰδέναι περὶ ὧν ἐγὼ σπουδάζω, εἴτ' ἐμοῦ ἀκηκοότες εἴτ' ἄλλων εἴθ' ὡς εὑρόντες αὐτοί· τούτους οὐκ ἔστι κατά γε τὴν ἐμὴν δόξαν περὶ τοῦ πράγματος ἐπαΐειν οὐδέν. οὔκουν ἐμόν γε περὶ αὐτῶν ἔστι σύγγραμμα οὐδὲ μήποτε γένηται· ῥητὸν γὰρ οὐδαμῶς ἐστὶν ὡς ἄλλα μαθήματα, ἀλλ' ἐκ πολλῆς συνουσίας γιγνομένης περὶ τὸ πρᾶγμα αὐτὸ καὶ τοῦ συζῆν ἐξαίφνης, οἷον ἀπὸ πυρὸς **[341d]** πηδήσαντος ἐξαφθὲν φῶς, ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ γενόμενον αὐτὸ ἑαυτὸ ἤδη τρέφει.

καίτοι τοσόνδε γε οἶδα, ὅτι γραφέντα ἢ λεχθέντα ὑπ' ἐμοῦ βέλτιστ' ἂν λεχθείη· καὶ μὴν ὅτι γεγραμμένα κακῶς οὐχ ἥκιστ' ἂν ἐμὲ λυποῖ. εἰ δέ μοι ἐφαίνετο γραπτέα θ' ἱκανῶς εἶναι πρὸς τοὺς πολλοὺς καὶ ῥητά, τί τούτου κάλλιον ἐπέπρακτ' ἂν ἡμῖν ἐν τῷ βίῳ ἢ τοῖς τε ἀνθρώποισι μέγα ὄφελος γράψαι καὶ τὴν φύσιν εἰς φῶς **[341e]** πᾶσι προαγαγεῖν; ἀλλ' οὔτε ἀνθρώποις ἡγοῦμαι τὴν ἐπιχείρησιν περὶ αὐτῶν γενομένην ἀγαθόν, εἰ μή τισιν ὀλίγοις, ὁπόσοι δυνατοὶ ἀνευρεῖν αὐτοὶ διὰ σμικρᾶς ἐνδείξεως· τῶν τε δὴ ἄλλων τοὺς μὲν καταφρονήσεως οὐκ ὀρθῆς ἐμπλήσειεν ἂν οὐδαμῇ ἐμμελῶς, τοὺς δὲ ὑψηλῆς καὶ χαύνης ἐλπίδος, ὡς **[342a]** σέμν' ἄττα μεμαθηκότας.

This is what I said then to Dionysius. Granted, I did not go over everything thoroughly, nor did [**341b**] Dionysius inquire. For he purported to know many of the most important things himself and to be fully competent based on what he had overheard from others. Later I heard that he had written about what he learned then, framing them as if they were a product of his own creation and not at all of things he had heard. But I know nothing of this. I do know that some others have written about these same questions, though even they do not know who they are. At any rate, this is what I can say about all those who have written and [**341c**] will write on the subject, and all those who claim to know about what I work on, whether they have heard about it from me, or from others, or whether they have figured it out on their own: it is not possible, in my opinion at least, for these men to have any knowledge of the matter. There is certainly no treatise of mine on it, nor will there ever be. For unlike other sciences, this one can in no way be communicated by means of words. On the contrary, it is only through a prolonged communion with the subject, by living with it, that, like a light that is kindled [**341d**] by a flickering flame, it begins to suddenly nourish itself within one's soul.

And I know this much as well: if it is to be written or related at all, it would be best related by me, and if it was written poorly, it would cause me no small amount of pain. Moreover, if it seemed to me that these things could be adequately written and expressed to the masses, what finer thing could I do in life than to set down in writing something that would be a great boon for humanity and to illuminate [**341e**] for everyone the nature of things? But I do not believe that the attempt to do so would be good for people, except for a certain few who are able to work it out for themselves with just a little bit of guidance. As for the rest, such writings would fill some with an improper and altogether unsuitable disdain, and others with the high but empty hope that [**342a**] they had learned something truly important.

ἔτι δὲ μακρότερα περὶ αὐτῶν ἐν νῷ μοι γέγονεν εἰπεῖν· τάχα γὰρ ἂν περὶ ὧν λέγω σαφέστερον ἂν εἴη τι λεχθέντων αὐτῶν. ἔστι γάρ τις λόγος ἀληθής ἐναντίος τῷ τολμήσαντι γράφειν τῶν τοιούτων καὶ ὁτιοῦν, πολλάκις μὲν ὑπ' ἐμοῦ καὶ πρόσθεν ῥηθείς, ἔοικε δ' οὖν εἶναι καὶ νῦν λεκτέος. ἔστι τῶν ὄντων ἑκάστῳ, δι' ὧν τὴν ἐπιστήμην ἀνάγκη παραγίγνεσθαι, τρία· τέταρτον δ' αὐτή· πέμπτον δ' αὐτὸ [**342b**] τιθέναι δεῖ ὃ δὴ γνωστόν τε καὶ ἀληθές ἐστιν· ὧν ἓν μὲν ὄνομα, δεύτερον δὲ λόγος, τὸ δὲ τρίτον εἴδωλον, τέταρτον δὲ ἐπιστήμη.

περὶ ἓν οὖν λαβὲ βουλόμενος μαθεῖν τὸ νῦν λεγόμενον, καὶ πάντων οὕτω πέρι νόησον. κύκλος ἐστί τι λεγόμενον, ᾧ τοῦτ' αὐτό ἐστιν ὄνομα ὃ νῦν ἐφθέγμεθα. λόγος δ' αὐτοῦ τὸ δεύτερον, ἐξ ὀνομάτων καὶ ῥημάτων συγκείμενος· τὸ γὰρ ἐκ τῶν ἐσχάτων ἐπὶ τὸ μέσον ἴσον ἀπέχον πάντη, λόγος ἂν εἴη ἐκείνου ᾧπερ στρογγύλον καὶ περιφερὲς [**342c**] ὄνομα καὶ κύκλος. τρίτον δὲ τὸ ζωγραφούμενόν τε καὶ ἐξαλειφόμενον καὶ τορνευόμενον καὶ ἀπολλύμενον· ὧν αὐτὸς ὁ κύκλος, ὃν πέρι πάντ' ἐστὶ ταῦτα, οὐδὲν πάσχει τούτων ὡς ἕτερον ὄν.

τέταρτον δὲ ἐπιστήμη καὶ νοῦς ἀληθής τε δόξα περὶ ταῦτ' ἐστίν· ὡς δὲ ἓν τοῦτο αὖ πᾶν θετέον, οὐκ ἐν φωναῖς οὐδ' ἐν σωμάτων σχήμασιν ἀλλ' ἐν ψυχαῖς ἐνόν, ᾧ δῆλον ἕτερόν τε ὂν αὐτοῦ τοῦ κύκλου τῆς φύσεως τῶν [**342d**] τε ἔμπροσθεν λεχθέντων τριῶν. τούτων δὲ ἐγγύτατα μὲν ξυγγενείᾳ καὶ ὁμοιότητι τοῦ πέμπτου νοῦς πεπλησίακε, τἆλλα δὲ πλέον ἀπέχει.

Nevertheless, I have it in mind to say a little more about this, for in speaking, what I am talking about will soon become clearer. There is a certain argument that is true and that stands in opposition to the man who writes anything at all about such things, something I have often spoken of before and which, it appears, I must now repeat: everything that exists has three elements through which one must approach the knowledge of that thing; the fourth element is knowledge itself, and the fifth, [**342b**] one must posit, is that which is in fact knowable and true. The first of these is "name," the second is "definition," the third is "image," and the fourth is knowledge.

If you wish to understand what I am saying, take a single example and reflect on everything else in the same way. There is something called a circle, the name of which is the same thing I have just pronounced. Its definition is the second thing, and it is composed of nouns and verbs: "that which is completely equal from every extremity to the middle" would be the definition of that thing that is called "round," "spherical," [**342c**] and "circle." The third element (the image) may be painted and expunged, lathed and destroyed, but the circle itself, which all these things represent, undergoes none of these changes, since it is something other than these things.

The fourth element is knowledge and understanding and a true conception of these things. And since we must establish that these are all a single thing – something that resides not in sounds or shapes of bodies but within souls – it is clear that it differs both from the nature of the circle itself and from [**342d**] the three elements mentioned above. And of these, understanding comes closest to the fifth in likeness and affinity, while all the others remain quite far off.

ταὐτὸν δὴ περί τε εὐθέος ἅμα καὶ περιφεροῦς σχήματος καὶ χρόας, περί τε ἀγαθοῦ καὶ καλοῦ καὶ δικαίου, καὶ περὶ σώματος ἅπαντος σκευαστοῦ τε καὶ κατὰ φύσιν γεγονότος, πυρὸς ὕδατός τε καὶ τῶν τοιούτων πάντων, καὶ ζώου ξύμπαντος πέρι καὶ ἐν ψυχαῖς ἤθους [καὶ] περὶ ποιήματα καὶ παθήματα ξύμπαντα· οὐ γὰρ ἂν τούτων [**342e**] μή τις τὰ τέτταρα λάβῃ ἁμῶς γέ πως, οὔποτε τελέως ἐπιστήμης τοῦ πέμπτου μέτοχος ἔσται. πρὸς γὰρ τούτοις ταῦτα οὐχ ἧττον ἐπιχειρεῖ τὸ ποῖόν τι περὶ ἕκαστον δηλοῦν [**343a**] ἢ τὸ ὂν ἑκάστου διὰ τὸ τῶν λόγων ἀσθενές· ὧν ἕνεκα νοῦν ἔχων οὐδεὶς τολμήσει ποτὲ εἰς αὐτὸ τιθέναι τὰ νενοημένα, καὶ ταῦτα εἰς ἀμετακίνητον, ὃ δὴ πάσχει τὰ γεγραμμένα τύποις.

τοῦτο δὲ πάλιν αὖ τὸ νῦν λεγόμενον δεῖ μαθεῖν. κύκλος ἕκαστος τῶν ἐν ταῖς πράξεσι γραφομένων ἢ καὶ τορνευθέντων μεστὸς τοῦ ἐναντίου ἐστὶ τῷ πέμπτῳ· τοῦ γὰρ εὐθέος ἐφάπτεται πάντη. αὐτὸς δέ, φαμέν, ὁ κύκλος οὔτε τι σμικρότερον οὔτε μεῖζον τῆς ἐναντίας ἔχει ἐν αὑτῷ φύσεως. ὄνομά τε αὐτῶν φαμὲν οὐδὲν οὐδενὶ [**343b**] βέβαιον εἶναι, κωλύειν δ' οὐδὲν τὰ νῦν στρογγύλα καλούμενα εὐθέα κεκλῆσθαι τά τε εὐθέα δὴ στρογγύλα, καὶ οὐδὲν ἧττον βεβαίως ἕξειν τοῖς μεταθεμένοις καὶ ἐναντίως καλοῦσι.

καὶ μὴν περὶ λόγου γε ὁ αὐτὸς λόγος, εἴπερ ἐξ ὀνομάτων καὶ ῥημάτων σύγκειται, μηδὲν ἱκανῶς βεβαίως εἶναι βέβαιον. μυρίος δὲ λόγος αὖ περὶ ἑκάστου τῶν τεττάρων, ὡς ἀσαφές· τὸ δὲ μέγιστον, ὅπερ εἴπομεν ὀλίγον ἔμπροσθεν, ὅτι δυοῖν ὄντοιν, τοῦ τε ὄντος καὶ τοῦ ποιοῦ τινός, οὐ τὸ [**343c**] ποιόν τι, τὸ δὲ τί ζητούσης εἰδέναι τῆς ψυχῆς, τὸ μὴ ζητούμενον ἕκαστον τῶν τεττάρων προτεῖνον τῇ ψυχῇ λόγῳ τε καὶ κατ' ἔργα, αἰσθήσεσιν εὐέλεγκτον τό τε λεγόμενον καὶ δεικνύμενον ἀεὶ παρεχόμενον ἕκαστον, ἀπορίας τε καὶ ἀσαφείας ἐμπίπλησι πάσης ὡς ἔπος εἰπεῖν πάντ' ἄνδρα.

To be sure, the same thing holds true for a straight line and a rounded shape and a color, and for the good and beautiful and just, and for an entire body whether it be artificially or naturally formed – fire and water and all such things – and for every living thing, and the dispositions within souls towards everything one creates or endures. For unless [**342e**] one can somehow grasp the first four of these, one will never fully partake in the knowledge of the fifth. In addition, because of the deficiency of language, these elements [**343a**] attempt to signify as much the quality of each thing as its essence. As a result, no one with any sense will ever dare to capture this understanding in words, especially in an inalterable form, which is what written characters endure.

Once again, we must go back so you understand what I am saying. Each circle that is in actuality drawn or even lathed is full of that which is opposed to the fifth, since it possesses straightness at every angle. But the circle itself, as I say, has no part either small or large of its opposite nature within itself. And the names of these things, I assert, have nothing that is [**343b**] constant unto themselves, and there is nothing to prevent that which is now called "round" from being called "straight" and the "straight" "round," and those things that are changed and called by their opposites will be no less constant.

The same reasoning certainly applies to the "definition," for if it is composed of nouns and verbs, then nothing constant can ever be sufficiently constant. An infinite discussion may be held about the uncertainty of each of the four things, but the most important thing, the one we mentioned a short time ago, is that although there exists an essence and a quality, when the soul is seeking to know something [**343c**] it searches for its essence, not its quality. And each of the four elements offers the soul, by means of discourse and according to facts, that which is not sought; everything presents itself in a form that is easy to show and to express and to refute with one's senses, and it fills just about every man with a sense of confusion and uncertainty.

ἐν οἷσι μὲν οὖν μηδ' εἰθισμένοι τὸ ἀληθὲς ζητεῖν ἐσμὲν ὑπὸ πονηρᾶς τροφῆς, ἐξαρκεῖ δὲ τὸ προταθὲν τῶν εἰδώλων, οὐ καταγέλαστοι γιγνόμεθα ὑπ' ἀλλήλων, οἱ ἐρωτώμενοι ὑπὸ [**343d**] τῶν ἐρωτώντων, δυναμένων δὲ τὰ τέτταρα διαρρίπτειν τε καὶ ἐλέγχειν· ἐν οἷς δ' ἂν τὸ πέμπτον ἀποκρίνασθαι καὶ δηλοῦν ἀναγκάζωμεν, ὁ βουλόμενος τῶν δυναμένων ἀνατρέπειν κρατεῖ, καὶ ποιεῖ τὸν ἐξηγούμενον ἐν λόγοις ἢ γράμμασιν ἢ ἀποκρίσεσι τοῖς πολλοῖς τῶν ἀκουόντων δοκεῖν μηδὲν γιγνώσκειν ὧν ἂν ἐπιχειρῇ γράφειν ἢ λέγειν, ἀγνοούντων ἐνίοτε ὡς οὐχ ἡ ψυχὴ τοῦ γράψαντος ἢ λέξαντος ἐλέγχεται, ἀλλ' ἡ τῶν τεττάρων φύσις ἑκάστου, πεφυκυῖα [**343e**] φαύλως. ἡ δὲ διὰ πάντων αὐτῶν διαγωγή, ἄνω καὶ κάτω μεταβαίνουσα ἐφ' ἕκαστον, μόγις ἐπιστήμην ἐνέτεκεν εὖ πεφυκότος εὖ πεφυκότι· κακῶς δὲ ἂν φυῇ, ὡς ἡ τῶν πολλῶν ἕξις τῆς ψυχῆς εἴς τε τὸ μαθεῖν εἴς τε τὰ λεγόμενα ἤθη [**344a**] πέφυκε, τὰ δὲ διέφθαρται, οὐδ' ἂν ὁ Λυγκεὺς ἰδεῖν ποιήσειε τοὺς τοιούτους.

ἑνὶ δὲ λόγῳ, τὸν μὴ ξυγγενῆ τοῦ πράγματος οὔτ' ἂν εὐμαθία ‹μαθεῖν› ποιήσειέ ποτε οὔτε μνήμη· τὴν ἀρχὴν γὰρ ἐν ἀλλοτρίαις ἕξεσιν οὐκ ἐγγίγνεται· ὥστε ὁπόσοι τῶν δικαίων τε καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ὅσα καλὰ μὴ προσφυεῖς εἰσὶ καὶ ξυγγενεῖς, ἄλλοι δὲ ἄλλων εὐμαθεῖς ἅμα καὶ μνήμονες, οὐδ' ὅσοι ξυγγενεῖς, δυσμαθεῖς δὲ καὶ ἀμνήμονες, οὐδένες τούτων μήποτε μάθωσιν ἀλήθειαν ἀρετῆς εἰς [**344b**] τὸ δυνατὸν οὐδὲ κακίας. ἅμα γὰρ αὐτὰ ἀνάγκη μανθάνειν καὶ τὸ ψεῦδος ἅμα καὶ ἀληθὲς τῆς ὅλης οὐσίας, μετὰ τριβῆς πάσης καὶ χρόνου πολλοῦ, ὅπερ ἐν ἀρχαῖς εἶπον·

Given this state of affairs, and thanks to our miserable upbringing, we are unaccustomed to seeking the truth, and at the same time we are satisfied by the images placed before us, nor do we make each other seem ridiculous by asking [**343d**] and answering questions, even though we are capable of seeing through and refuting the four things. And if we force someone to distinguish and explain the fifth, whoever is willing and able to upend the argument wins, and he makes the one who is offering a full interpretation through speech, writing, or actual answers appear, to most of his audience, to know nothing of the things about which he is trying to write or speak, since the audience is sometimes unaware that it is not the soul of the writer or speaker that is being refuted, but rather the nature of each of the four things, which is inherently [**343e**] flawed. Nevertheless, the thorough examination of all these problems, going up and down and over each one with great effort, imparts knowledge of a good thing unto a person of a good nature. If one's nature is bad, however, as is the condition of most souls with respect both to learning and to what are called 'morals,' [**344a**] all these things wither and die, and not even Lynceus would be able to make such men see.

In a word, neither memory nor a sharp mind can make anything of a person who has no affinity for the matter, for a seed cannot germinate in hostile terrain. Hence all those who have no natural connection or affinity with the ways of justice and all other beautiful things, and other individuals who are at once well-versed in and cognizant of other issues, nor indeed those who do share an affinity but whose minds and memories are not sharp – none of these will ever learn the truth of virtue [**344b**] or of depravity to the full extent possible. For it is necessary to study these things together, along with what is true and untrue of all existence, dedicating to these questions ample time and all one's energy, as I said at the beginning.

μόγις δὲ τριβόμενα πρὸς ἄλληλα αὐτῶν ἕκαστα, ὀνόματα καὶ λόγοι ὄψεις τε καὶ αἰσθήσεις, ἐν εὐμενέσιν ἐλέγχοις ἐλεγχόμενα καὶ ἄνευ φθόνων ἐρωτήσεσι καὶ ἀποκρίσεσι χρωμένων, ἐξέλαμψε φρόνησις περὶ ἕκαστον καὶ νοῦς, συντείνοντι ὅ τι **[344c]** μάλιστ' εἰς δύναμιν ἀνθρωπίνην. διὸ δὴ πᾶς ἀνὴρ σπουδαῖος τῶν ὄντως σπουδαίων πέρι πολλοῦ δεῖ μὴ γράψας ποτὲ ἐν ἀνθρώποις εἰς φθόνον καὶ ἀπορίαν καταβαλῇ.

ἑνὶ δὴ ἐκ τούτων δεῖ γιγνώσκειν λόγῳ, ὅταν ἴδῃ τίς του συγγράμματα γεγραμμένα εἴτε ἐν νόμοις νομοθέτου εἴτε ἐν ἄλλοις τισὶν ἅττ' οὖν, ὡς οὐκ ἦν τούτῳ ταῦτα σπουδαιότατα, εἴπερ ἔστ' αὐτὸς σπουδαῖος, κεῖται δέ που ἐν χώρᾳ τῇ καλλίστῃ τῶν τούτου· εἰ δὲ ὄντως αὐτῷ ταῦτ' ἐσπουδασμένα ἐν γράμμασιν **[344d]** ἐτέθη, "ἐξ ἄρα δή τοι ἔπειτα," θεοὶ μὲν οὔ, βροτοὶ δὲ "φρένας ἄλεσαν αὐτοί."[8]

τούτῳ δὴ τῷ μύθῳ τε καὶ πλάνῳ ὁ ξυνεπισπόμενος εὖ εἴσεται, εἴτ' οὖν Διονύσιος ἔγραψέ τι τῶν περὶ φύσεως ἄκρων καὶ πρώτων εἴτε τις ἐλάττων εἴτε μείζων, ὡς οὐδὲν ἀκηκοὼς οὐδὲ μεμαθηκὼς ἦν ὑγιὲς ὧν ἔγραψε κατὰ τὸν ἐμὸν λόγον· ὁμοίως γὰρ ἂν αὐτὰ ἐσέβετο ἐμοί, καὶ οὐκ ἂν αὐτὰ ἐτόλμησεν εἰς ἀναρμοστίαν καὶ ἀπρέπειαν ἐκβάλλειν. οὔτε γὰρ ὑπομνημάτων χάριν αὐτὰ ἔγραψεν· οὐδὲν γὰρ **[344e]** δεινὸν μή τις αὐτὸ ἐπιλάθηται, ἐὰν ἅπαξ τῇ ψυχῇ περιλάβῃ, πάντων γὰρ ἐν βραχυτάτοις κεῖται· φιλοτιμίας δὲ αἰσχρᾶς, εἴπερ, ἕνεκα, εἴθ' ὡς αὑτοῦ τιθέμενος εἴθ' ὡς παιδείας δὴ μέτοχος ὤν, ἧς οὐκ ἄξιος ἦν ἀγαπῶν δόξαν τὴν **[345a]** τῆς μετοχῆς γενομένης.

[8] From Hom. *Il*. 7.360, 12.234.

And when all of these things – names, definitions, appearances, and perceptions – have been painstakingly elaborated in relation to each other and examined through thoughtful argumentation by people who ask questions and provide answers without malice, only then is it that the light of knowledge and understanding of each element shines forth unto a person who has applied himself [**344c**] as much as humanly possible. As a result, any man who is serious about truly serious subjects must absolutely avoid writing about them and making them sources of envy and embarrassment for humanity.

To summarize briefly, then, whenever we look at a written composition, whether it be the laws of a lawmaker or anything else whatsoever, we must recognize that the author's most serious ideas do not reside within this text, even if the author himself is serious, but that those ideas remain lodged in the most beautiful part of his soul. And if his most seriously elaborated ideas have in fact been set down [**344d**] in writing, then "it is most certainly" not the gods but mortal men "who have destroyed his mind."

Whoever has followed me on this meandering narrative will understand that, following this logic, whether it was Dionysius himself who wrote something about the first and loftiest aspects of nature, or whether it was a lesser or greater man, this person has neither learned nor understood properly anything that he has written. For he would have respected these ideas just as I do, and he would not have dared to banish them to a state of disharmony and disrepute. Nor did he write them down in order to remember them better, for no one [**344e**] can forget something so powerful once he has grasped it with his entire soul, since it is set down in the most compact of formulations. On the contrary, this person wrote out of shameful ambition, whether he attributed the work to himself or to his affiliation with a school, and by delighting in the reputation that came with this affiliation, he proved himself [**345a**] to be unworthy of it.

Εἰ μὲν οὖν ἐκ τῆς μιᾶς συνουσίας Διονυσίῳ τοῦτο γέγονε, τάχ' ἂν εἴη· γέγονε δ' οὖν ὅπως, "ἴττω Ζεύς," φησὶν ὁ Θηβαῖος· διεξῆλθον μὲν γὰρ ὡς εἶπόν τότε ἐγὼ καὶ ἅπαξ μόνον, ὕστερον δὲ οὐ πώποτε ἔτι. ἐννοεῖν δὴ δεῖ τὸ μετὰ τοῦτο, ὅτῳ μέλει τὸ περὶ αὐτὰ γεγονὸς εὑρεῖν, ὅπῃ ποτὲ γέγονε, τίνι πότ' αἰτίᾳ τὸ δεύτερον καὶ τὸ τρίτον πλεονάκις τε οὐ διεξῆμεν· πότερον Διονύσιος ἀκούσας μόνον [**345b**] ἅπαξ οὕτως εἰδέναι τε οἴεται καὶ ἱκανῶς οἶδεν, εἴτε αὐτὸς εὑρὼν ἢ καὶ μαθὼν ἔμπροσθεν παρ' ἑτέρων, ἢ φαῦλα εἶναι τὰ λεχθέντα, ἢ τὸ τρίτον οὐ καθ' αὑτόν, μείζονα δέ, καὶ ὄντως οὐκ ἂν δυνατὸς εἶναι φρονήσεώς τε καὶ ἀρετῆς ζῆν ἐπιμελούμενος.

εἰ μὲν γὰρ φαῦλα, πολλοῖς μάρτυσι μαχεῖται τὰ ἐναντία λέγουσιν, οἳ περὶ τῶν τοιούτων πάμπολυ Διονυσίου κυριώτεροι ἂν εἶεν κριταί. εἰ δὲ εὑρηκέναι ἢ μεμαθηκέναι, ἄξια δ' οὖν εἶναι πρὸς παιδείαν ψυχῆς ἐλευθέραν, [**345c**] πῶς ἂν μὴ θαυμαστὸς ὢν ἄνθρωπος τὸν ἡγεμόνα τούτων καὶ κύριον οὕτως εὐχερῶς ἠτίμασέ ποτ' ἄν;

πῶς δ' ἠτίμασεν ἐγὼ φράζοιμ' ἄν. οὐ πολὺν χρόνον διαλιπὼν τὸ μετὰ τοῦτο, ἐν τῷ πρόσθεν Δίωνα ἐῶν τὰ ἑαυτοῦ κεκτῆσθαι καὶ καρποῦσθαι χρήματα, τότε οὐκέτ' εἴα τοὺς ἐπιτρόπους αὐτοῦ πέμπειν εἰς Πελοπόννησον, καθάπερ ἐπιλελησμένος τῆς ἐπιστολῆς παντάπασιν· εἶναι γὰρ αὐτὰ οὐ Δίωνος ἀλλὰ τοῦ υἱέος, ὄντος μὲν ἀδελφιδοῦ [**345d**] αὐτοῦ κατὰ νόμους ἐπιτροπεύοντος. τὰ μὲν δὴ πεπραγμένα μέχρι τούτου ταῦτ' ἦν ἐν τῷ τότε χρόνῳ, τούτων δὲ οὕτω γενομένων ἑωράκειν τε ἐγὼ ἀκριβῶς τὴν ἐπιθυμίαν τὴν Διονυσίου φιλοσοφίας, ἀγανακτεῖν τε ἐξῆν εἴτε βουλοίμην εἴτε μή. ἦν γὰρ θέρος ἤδη τότε καὶ ἔκπλοι τῶν νεῶν.

Certainly, if Dionysius had acquired this through a single interaction, such as it may be, then how he acquired it "only Zeus knows," as a Theban would say. As I said, only once did I go over these things with him, and never again after that. Moreover, whoever cares to discover the origins and development of these issues must understand what came afterwards, and why I did not go over these things a second or third time with him, or even more. I do not know whether Dionysius believes that after hearing [**345b**] everything a single time he understood it all sufficiently, or whether he figured it out for himself or learned it beforehand from others, or whether perhaps he believes that the things I said were worthless, or conversely that they are not meant for him, that they were beyond him and that he would never really be able to lead a life directed at wisdom and virtue.

Now, if he thinks they are worthless, then he is lining up against a great number of individuals who attest the opposite, people who would be far better judges of such things than Dionysius. Conversely, if he says that he discovered or learned these things beforehand (and by extension that they are a worthwhile part of the education of a free soul), [**345c**] how then, unless he is a truly astonishing person, could he have so callously mistreated the leading authority on these questions?

As for how he mistreated me, I will now explain. Not much time had passed before Dionysius, who had previously allowed Dion to hold onto his possessions and use the income from his estates, forbade his trustees from sending anything to the Peloponnese. It was as if he had completely forgotten about his earlier letter, for he claimed that those things belonged not to Dion but to his son, Dionysius's nephew, [**345d**] who according to statute was his ward. This is how far things had progressed at this point in time, and given this state of affairs, I was able to see quite clearly the 'desire' that Dionysius had for philosophy. Whether I wanted to be or not, I was justifiably vexed, for it was already summer at that point and ships were leaving port.

ἐδόκει δὴ χαλεπαίνειν μὲν οὐ δεῖν ἐμὲ Διονυσίῳ μᾶλλον ἢ ἐμαυτῷ τε καὶ τοῖς βιασαμένοις ἐλθεῖν ἐμὲ τὸ [**345e**] τρίτον εἰς τὸν πορθμὸν τὸν περὶ τὴν Σκύλλαν, "ὄφρ' ἔτι τὴν ὀλοὴν ἀναμετρήσαιμι Χάρυβδιν,"[9] λέγειν δὲ πρὸς Διονύσιον ὅτι μοι μένειν ἀδύνατον εἴη Δίωνος οὕτω προπεπηλακισμένου. ὁ δὲ παρεμυθεῖτό τε καὶ ἐδεῖτο μένειν, οὐκ οἰόμενός οἱ καλῶς ἔχειν ἐμὲ ἄγγελον αὐτὸν τῶν τοιούτων ἐλθεῖν ὅ τι τάχος· οὐ πείθων δὲ αὐτός μοι πομπὴν [**346a**] παρασκευάσειν ἔφη.

ἐγὼ γὰρ ἐν τοῖς ἀποστόλοις πλοίοις ἐμβὰς διενοούμην πλεῖν, τεθυμωμένος πάσχειν τε οἰόμενος δεῖν, εἰ διακωλυοίμην, ὁτιοῦν, ἐπειδὴ περιφανῶς ἠδίκουν μὲν οὐδέν, ἠδικούμην δέ. ὁ δὲ οὐδέν με τοῦ καταμένειν προσιέμενον ὁρῶν μηχανὴν τοῦ μεῖναι τὸν τότε ἔκπλουν μηχανᾶται τοιάνδε τινά.

τῇ μετὰ ταῦτα ἐλθὼν ἡμέρᾳ λέγει πρός με πιθανὸν λόγον· "ἐμοὶ καὶ σοὶ Δίων," ἔφη, "καὶ τὰ Δίωνος [**346b**] ἐκποδὼν ἀπαλλαχθήτω τοῦ περὶ αὐτὰ πολλάκις διαφέρεσθαι· ποιήσω γὰρ διὰ σέ," ἔφη, "Δίωνι τάδε. ἀξιῶ ἐκεῖνον ἀπολαβόντα τὰ ἑαυτοῦ οἰκεῖν μὲν ἐν Πελοποννήσῳ, μὴ ὡς φυγάδα δέ, ἀλλ' ὡς αὐτῷ καὶ δεῦρο ἐξὸν ἀποδημεῖν, ὅταν ἐκείνῳ τε καὶ ἐμοὶ καὶ ὑμῖν τοῖς φίλοις κοινῇ ξυνδοκῇ· ταῦτα δ' εἶναι μὴ ἐπιβουλεύοντος ἐμοί· τούτων δὲ

ἐγγυητὰς γίγνεσθαι σέ τε καὶ τοὺς σοὺς οἰκείους καὶ τοὺς ἐνθάδε Δίωνος, ὑμῖν δὲ τὸ βέβαιον ἐκεῖνος παρεχέτω. τὰ χρήματα δὲ ἃ ἂν λάβῃ, [**346c**] κατὰ Πελοπόννησον μὲν καὶ Ἀθήνας κείσθω παρ' οἷσ τισὶν ἂν ὑμῖν δοκῇ, καρπούσθω δὲ Δίων, μὴ κύριος δὲ ἄνευ ὑμῶν γιγνέσθω ἀνελέσθαι. ἐγὼ γὰρ ἐκείνῳ μὲν οὐ σφόδρα πιστεύω τούτοις χρώμενον ἂν τοῖς χρήμασι δίκαιον γίγνεσθαι περὶ ἐμέ· οὐ γὰρ ὀλίγα ἔσται· σοὶ δὲ καὶ τοῖς σοῖς μᾶλλον πεπίστευκα. ὅρα δὴ ταῦτα εἴ σοι ἀρέσκει, καὶ μένε ἐπὶ τούτοις τὸν ἐνιαυτὸν τοῦτον, εἰς δὲ ὥρας ἄπιθι [**346d**] λαβὼν τὰ χρήματα ταῦτα· καὶ Δίων εὖ οἶδ' ὅτι πολλὴν χάριν ἕξει σοι διαπραξαμένῳ ταῦτα ὑπὲρ ἐκείνου."

[9] Hom. *Od*. 12.428.

Still, it seemed to me that I should be no angrier with Dionysius than with myself and with those who had coerced me into coming [**345e**] for the third time to the strait of Scylla, "to cross over again the dread Charybdis," and that I should tell Dionysius that it was impossible for me to remain now that Dion's reputation had been tarred in this way. He, however, tried to reassure me, and he begged me to stay, thinking that it would not be good for him to have me hurrying to deliver such news myself; and when he did not convince me he said that he would provide [**346a**] transportation for me himself.

In fact, my intention was to board a dispatch vessel for the journey. I was furious and believed I needed to do whatever it took should I be impeded, since I was quite obviously doing nothing wrong but was instead being wronged myself. Dionysius, however, when he saw that I was not moved to remain, devised a plot to get me to stay through the sailing season, which went something like this.

He came to me on the following day and presented me with a specious argument: "Dion and his affairs," he said, "must be eliminated [**346b**] as a regular source of tension between the two of us. So on your behalf," he said, "I will do the following for Dion. I expect him to take his belongings and go live in the Peloponnese, not as an exile but under the pretense that he can travel here any time that he and I and you, his friends, approve of it together. But this depends on him not plotting against me, and on you and your companions and Dion's relations here guaranteeing that pledge, while he should give you his assurance. Whatever possessions he takes [**346c**] shall remain in the Peloponnese and in Athens in the hands of whomever you think fit, and Dion can use the income from these, but he shall not be able to take charge of them without you. For I do not particularly trust him to be fair to me if he has full access to his funds – and these will not be paltry – while I do trust you and your companions. Think about it and see if these terms satisfy you, remain under them for this year, and come spring [**346d**] take his money and leave. I am certain that Dion will be most grateful to you for taking care of these things on his behalf."

τοῦτον δὴ ἐγὼ τὸν λόγον ἀκούσας ἐδυσχέραινον μέν, ὅμως δὲ βουλευσάμενος ἔφην εἰς τὴν ὑστεραίαν αὐτῷ περὶ τούτων τὰ δόξαντα ἀπαγγελεῖν. ταῦτα ξυνεθέμεθα τότε. ἐβουλευόμην δὴ τὸ μετὰ ταῦτα κατ' ἐμαυτὸν γενόμενος, μάλα συγκεχυμένος· πρῶτος δ' ἦν μοι τῆς βουλῆς ἡγούμενος ὅδε [**346e**] λόγος· "φέρε, εἰ διανοεῖται τούτων μηδὲν ποιεῖν Διονύσιος ὧν φησίν, ἀπελθόντος δ' ἐμοῦ ἐὰν ἐπιστέλλῃ Δίωνι πιθανῶς αὐτός τε καὶ ἄλλοις πολλοῖς τῶν αὐτοῦ διακελευόμενος, ἃ νῦν πρὸς ἐμὲ λέγει, ὡς αὐτοῦ μὲν ἐθέλοντος, ἐμοῦ δὲ οὐκ ἐθελήσαντος ἃ προὔκαλεῖτό με δρᾶν, ἀλλ' ὀλιγωρήσαντος τῶν ἐκείνου τὸ παράπαν πραγμάτων, πρὸς δὲ καὶ τούτοισιν ἔτι μηδ' ἐθέλῃ με ἐκπέμπειν αὐτὸς τῶν ναυκλήρων [**347a**] μηδενὶ προστάττων, ἐνδείξηται δὲ πᾶσι ῥᾳδίως ὡς ἀβουλῶν ἐμὲ ἐκπλεῖν, ἆρά τις ἐθελήσει με ἄγειν ναύτην ὁρμώμενον ἐκ τῆς Διονυσίου οἰκίας;"(ᾤκουν γὰρ δὴ πρὸς τοῖς ἄλλοισι κακοῖς ἐν τῷ κήπῳ τῷ περὶ τὴν οἰκίαν, ὅθεν οὐδ' ἂν ὁ θυρωρὸς ἤθελέ με ἀφεῖναι μὴ πεμφθείσης αὐτῷ τινὸς ἐντολῆς παρὰ Διονυσίου.) "ἂν δὲ περιμείνω τὸν ἐνιαυτόν, ἕξω μὲν Δίωνι ταῦτα ἐπιστέλλειν, ἐν οἷς τ' αὖτ' εἰμὶ καὶ ἃ πράττω. καὶ ἐὰν μὲν δὴ ποιῇ τι Διονύσιος ὧν φησιν, οὐ [**347b**] παντάπασιν ἔσται μοι καταγελάστως πεπραγμένα· τάλαντα γὰρ ἴσως ἐστὶν οὐκ ἔλαττον, ἂν ἐκτιμᾷ τις ὀρθῶς, ἑκατὸν ἡ Δίωνος οὐσία· ἂν δ' οὖν γίγνηται τὰ νῦν ὑποφαίνοντα, οἷα εἰκὸς αὐτὰ γίγνεσθαι, ἀπορῶ μὲν ὅ τι χρήσομαι ἐμαυτῷ, ὅμως δὲ ἀναγκαῖον ἴσως ἐνιαυτόν γ' ἔτι πονῆσαι καὶ ἔργοις ἐλέγξαι πειρᾶσθαι τὰς Διονυσίου μηχανάς."

ταῦτά μοι δόξαντα εἰς τὴν ὑστεραίαν εἶπον πρὸς Διονύσιον ὅτι "δέδοκταί [**347c**] μοι μένειν. ἀξιῶ μήν," ἔφην, "μὴ κύριον ἡγεῖσθαί σε Δίωνος ἐμέ, πέμπειν δὲ μετ' ἐμοῦ σὲ παρ' αὐτὸν γράμματα τὰ νῦν δεδογμένα δηλοῦντα, καὶ ἐρωτᾷν εἴτε ἀρκεῖ ταῦτα αὐτῷ, καὶ εἰ μή, βούλεται δὲ ἄλλ' ἄττα καὶ ἀξιοῖ, καὶ ταῦτα ἐπιστέλλειν ὅ τι τάχιστα, σὲ δὲ νεωτερίζειν μηδέν πω τῶν περὶ ἐκεῖνον." ταῦτ' ἐρρήθη, ταῦτα ξυνωμολογήσαμεν, ὡς νῦν εἴρηται σχεδόν.

When I heard these words I was in fact quite annoyed, but all the same I said that I would consider the matter until the next day and then tell him what I thought. That was how we left it then. Afterwards of course, when I was considering the matter on my own, I was deeply troubled. The first line of thought that came to me was [**346e**] the following: "come on, if Dionysius has no intention of doing what he says, and if I leave and he himself sends specious reports to Dion (and directs many others here to do so as well) about the things he just said to me, and how he was willing while I was unwilling to do what he was urging me to do, and that instead I totally neglected his interests, and if on top of all this he no longer wishes to allow me to leave and does not send the order [**347a**] to any of the captains, well, he will easily demonstrate to everyone that he does not wish for me to set sail, and then will anyone want to bring me on as a passenger when I set out from Dionysius's house?" (Indeed, on top of all my other problems I was staying in the orchard next to his residence, from which not even the door keeper would have been inclined to let me leave without some order sent to him by Dionysius.) "On the other hand, if I remain for the year I will be able to send a message to Dion about the situation in which I find myself and how I'm doing. And if Dionysius does any of the things he's promising, my [**347b**] actions will not end up being entirely ridiculous, as Dion's property is probably worth no less than a hundred talents, if it's estimated properly. Conversely, if it turns out that these faint signs are exactly what they seem, well, I don't know what I'll do with myself, but all the same it is perhaps necessary to suffer for a year longer and try to expose Dionysius's plot."

These were my thoughts, and on the next day I said to Dionysius, "I have decided [**347c**] to stay. But of course I insist," I said, "that you not think of me as Dion's guardian, but that you and I send him a letter in which we specify the terms we have just agreed upon, and that you ask him whether these satisfy him. If they don't, and he desires or insists upon something else, he should let us know as soon as possible, but you must at no point come up with any new sanctions against him." This is what I said, and this is what we agreed upon, just about exactly as I have stated it.

ἐξέπλευσε δὴ τὰ πλοῖα μετὰ τοῦτο, καὶ οὐκέτι μοι δυνατὸν ἦν πλεῖν, ὅτε δή μοι καὶ [**347d**] Διονύσιος ἐμνήσθη λέγων ὅτι τὴν ἡμίσειαν τῆς οὐσίας εἶναι δέοι Δίωνος, τὴν δ' ἡμίσειαν τοῦ υἱέος· ἔφη δὴ πωλήσειν αὐτήν, πραθείσης δὲ τὰ μὲν ἡμίσεα ἐμοὶ δώσειν ἄγειν, τὰ δ' ἡμίσεα τῷ παιδὶ καταλείψειν αὐτοῦ· τὸ γὰρ δὴ δικαιότατον οὕτως ἔχειν. πληγεὶς δ' ἐγὼ τῷ λεχθέντι πάνυ μὲν ᾤμην γελοῖον εἶναι ἀντιλέγειν ἔτι, ὅμως δ' εἶπον ὅτι χρείη τὴν παρὰ Δίωνος ἐπιστολὴν περιμένειν ἡμᾶς καὶ ταῦτα πάλιν αὐτὰ ἐπιστέλλειν. ὁ δὲ ἑξῆς τούτοις πάνυ νεανικῶς [**347e**] ἐπώλει τὴν οὐσίαν αὐτοῦ πᾶσαν, ὅπῃ τε καὶ ὅπως ἤθελε καὶ οἷσ τισί, πρὸς ἐμὲ δὲ οὐδὲν ὅλως ἐφθέγγετο περὶ αὐτῶν, καὶ μὴν ὡσαύτως ἐγὼ πρὸς ἐκεῖνον αὖ περὶ τῶν Δίωνος πραγμάτων οὐδὲν ἔτι διελεγόμην· οὐδὲν γὰρ ἔτι πλέον ᾤμην ποιεῖν.

μέχρι μὲν δὴ τούτων ταύτῃ μοι βεβοηθημένον ἐγεγόνει φιλοσοφίᾳ καὶ φίλοις· τὸ δὲ μετὰ ταῦτα ἐζῶμεν ἐγὼ καὶ [**348a**] Διονύσιος, ἐγὼ μὲν βλέπων ἔξω, καθάπερ ὄρνις ποθῶν ποθὲν ἀναπτέσθαι, ὁ δὲ διαμηχανώμενος τίνα τρόπον ἀνασοβήσοι με μηδὲν ἀποδοὺς τῶν Δίωνος. ὅμως δὲ ἐφάνημεν ἑταῖροί γε εἶναι πρὸς πᾶσαν Σικελίαν.

τῶν δὴ μισθοφόρων τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους Διονύσιος ἐπεχείρησεν ὀλιγομισθοτέρους ποιεῖν παρὰ τὰ τοῦ πατρὸς ἔθη, θυμωθέντες δὲ οἱ στρατιῶται ξυνελέγησαν ἁθρόοι καὶ οὐκ ἔφασαν ἐπιτρέψειν. ὁ δ' ἐπεχείρει [**348b**] βιάζεσθαι κλείσας τὰς τῆς ἀκροπόλεως πύλας, οἱ δ' ἐφέροντο εὐθὺς πρὸς τὰ τείχη, παιῶνά τινα ἀναβοήσαντες βάρβαρον καὶ πολεμικόν· οὗ δὴ περιδεὴς Διονύσιος γενόμενος ἅπαντα συνεχώρησε καὶ ἔτι πλείω τοῖς τότε συλλεχθεῖσι τῶν πελταστῶν.

After this the ships set sail and it was no longer possible for me to depart. Only then did Dionysius [**347d**] remember to mention to me that Dion was entitled to only half his estate, and his son the other half. Moreover, he said that he was going to sell the estate, and that when this was done he would give me one half to bring to Dion and leave the other half here for his son, on the grounds that it would be fairest this way. I was shocked by what he said, and though I thought it would be totally ridiculous for me to keep arguing, I said we ought to wait for a letter from Dion and then write back to him with these updates. Right after this, however, Dionysius went ahead [**347e**] and sold Dion's entire estate most brazenly, wherever, however, and to whomever he wished, and he said absolutely nothing about all this to me. Likewise, I certainly did not bring up Dion's affairs with him anymore, for I thought there was nothing more I could do.

Up till now I had been providing assistance to philosophy and to my friends in this manner. Afterwards, however, we lived, Dionysius [**348a**] and I, with myself gazing outwards like a bird longing to take flight, and with him scheming up some way to scare me off without returning anything of Dion's. Nevertheless, to all of Sicily we appeared to be friends.

At this point, and in contrast to his father's practice, Dionysius attempted to reduce the wages of his more seasoned mercenaries. The soldiers became angry and convened en masse and said that they would not back down. Dionysius then tried [**348b**] to break them by closing the gates to the acropolis, after which they immediately came up to the city walls and burst into some sort of warlike, barbarian paean. Dionysius then grew very afraid and conceded to all the demands, and then some, of the peltasts that had convened.

λόγος δή τις ταχὺ διῆλθεν ὡς Ἡρακλείδης αἴτιος εἴη γεγονὼς πάντων τούτων. ὃν ἀκούσας ὁ μὲν Ἡρακλείδης ἐκποδὼν αὑτὸν ἔσχεν ἀφανῆ, Διονύσιος [**348c**] δὲ ἐζήτει λαβεῖν. ἀπορῶν δέ, Θεοδότην μεταπεμψάμενος εἰς τὸν κῆπον· ἔτυχον δ' ἐν τῷ κήπῳ καὶ ἐγὼ τότε περιπατῶν· τὰ μὲν οὖν ἄλλα οὔτ' οἶδα οὔτ' ἤκουον διαλεγομένων, ἃ δὲ ἐναντίον εἶπε Θεοδότης ἐμοῦ πρὸς Διονύσιον, οἶδά τε καὶ μέμνημαι. "Πλάτων γάρ," ἔφη, "Διονύσιον ἐγὼ πείθω τουτονί, ἐὰν ἐγὼ γένωμαι δεῦρο Ἡρακλείδην κομίσαι δυνατὸς ἡμῖν εἰς λόγους περὶ τῶν ἐγκλημάτων αὐτῷ τῶν νῦν γεγονότων, ἂν ἄρα μὴ δόξῃ δεῖν αὐτὸν οἰκεῖν ἐν Σικελίᾳ, τόν τε υἱὸν λαβόντα καὶ τὴν γυναῖκα ἀξιῶ εἰς [**348d**] Πελοπόννησον ἀποπλεῖν, οἰκεῖν τε βλάπτοντα μηδὲν Διονύσιον ἐκεῖ, καρπούμενον δὲ τὰ ἑαυτοῦ. μετεπεμψάμην μὲν οὖν καὶ πρότερον αὐτόν, μεταπέμψομαι δὲ καὶ νῦν, ἄν τ' οὖν ἀπὸ τῆς προτέρας μεταπομπῆς ἄν τε καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς νῦν ὑπακούσῃ μοι. Διονύσιον δὲ ἀξιῶ καὶ δέομαι, ἄν τις ἐντυγχάνῃ Ἡρακλείδῃ ἐάν τ' ἐν ἀγρῷ ἐάν τ' ἐνθάδε, μηδὲν ἄλλο [**348e**] αὐτῷ φλαῦρον γίγνεσθαι, μεταστῆναι δ' ἐκ τῆς χώρας, ἕως ἂν ἄλλο τι Διονυσίῳ δόξῃ. "ταῦτα," ἔφη, "συγχωρεῖς;" λέγων πρὸς τὸν Διονύσιον. "συγχωρῶ· μηδ' ἂν πρὸς τῇ σῇ," ἔφη, "φανῇ οἰκίᾳ, πείσεσθαι φλαῦρον μηδὲν παρὰ τὰ νῦν εἰρημένα."

τῇ δὴ μετὰ ταύτην τὴν ἡμέραν δείλης Εὐρύβιος καὶ Θεοδότης προσηλθέτην μοι σπουδῇ τεθορυβημένω θαυμαστῶς, καὶ ὁ Θεοδότης λέγει, "Πλάτων," ἔφη, "παρῆσθα χθὲς οἷς περὶ Ἡρακλείδου Διονύσιος ὡμολόγει πρὸς ἐμὲ καὶ σέ;" "πῶς δὲ οὔκ;" ἔφην. "νῦν τοίνυν," ἦ δ' ὅς, "περιθέουσι πελτασταὶ λαβεῖν Ἡρακλείδην ζητοῦντες, ὁ δὲ εἶναί πῃ ταύτῃ κινδυνεύει. ἀλλ' ἡμῖν," ἔφη, [**349a**] "συνακολούθησον πρὸς Διονύσιον ἁπάσῃ μηχανῇ." ᾠχόμεθα οὖν καὶ εἰσήλθομεν παρ' αὐτόν, καὶ τὼ μὲν ἑστάτην σιγῇ δακρύοντε, ἐγὼ δὲ εἶπον "οἵδε πεφόβηνται μή τι σὺ παρὰ τὰ χθὲς ὡμολογημένα ποιήσῃς περὶ Ἡρακλείδην νεώτερον· δοκεῖ γάρ μοι ταύτῃ πῃ γεγονέναι φανερὸς ἀποτετραμμένος."

Word then spread quite quickly that Heracleides was responsible for all this. Heracleides heard this and made himself scarce, and Dionysius [**348c**] set about trying to catch him, and when he was unable to do so, he summoned Theodotes to the orchard. I happened to be walking around the orchard at that moment, and while I did not listen to the whole conversation and do not know everything else that was said, I remember well what Theodotes said to Dionysius in front of me: "Plato," he said, "I am trying to nudge Dionysius towards this course of action: if I am able to bring Heracleides back here to discuss the accusations that have been made against him, and if it is resolved that he should not reside in Sicily, then I think that he should take his wife and son and [**348d**] sail away to the Peloponnese and live there without causing Dionysius any harm, while reaping the benefits of his assets. I summoned him earlier and I will summon him again now, and perhaps he will accept one invitation or the other. But I ask and insist that Dionysius see to it that, if anyone should stumble upon Heracleides, either here or in the countryside, he will face [**348e**] no further consequence beyond being banished from the country, until Dionysius should decide otherwise. "Do you agree to this?" he asked Dionysius. "I agree," he said, "that even if he is spotted at your house he shall not meet with any consequences aside from those you have just mentioned."

The following afternoon Eurybius and Theodotes both came to me with the utmost urgency, tremendously worked up, and Theodotes began speaking: "Plato," he asked, "were you there yesterday for the agreements that Dionysius made with you and me about Heracleides?" "Of course," I said. "Well now," said Theodotes, "peltasts are running around trying to catch Heracleides, and I'm afraid he might be somewhere around here! [**349a**] You absolutely must come with us to Dionysius!" We set out and came upon him, and while those other two stood by shedding tears in silence, I said: "these men are afraid that somehow, contrary to the agreement that we made yesterday, you are devising a new punishment for Heracleides. For it seems that he has been spotted returning to these parts."

ὁ δὲ ἀκούσας ἀνεφλέχθη τε καὶ παντοδαπὰ χρώματα ἦκεν, οἷα ἂν θυμούμενος ἀφείη· προσπεσὼν δ' αὐτῷ [**349b**] ὁ Θεοδότης, λαβόμενος τῆς χειρὸς ἐδάκρυσέ τε καὶ ἱκέτευε μηδὲν τοιοῦτον ποιεῖν. ὑπολαβὼν δ' ἐγὼ παραμυθούμενος, "θάρρει, Θεοδότα," ἔφην· "οὐ γὰρ τολμήσει Διονύσιος παρὰ τὰ χθὲς ὡμολογημένα ἄλλα ποτὲ δρᾶν." καὶ ὃς ἐμβλέψας μοι καὶ μάλα τυραννικῶς, "σοί," ἔφη, "ἐγὼ οὔ τέ τι σμικρὸν οὔτε μέγα ὡμολόγησα." "νὴ τοὺς θεούς," ἦν δ' ἐγώ, "σύ γε ταῦτα ἃ σοῦ νῦν οὗτος δεῖται μὴ ποιεῖν." καὶ εἰπὼν ταῦτα ἀποστρεφόμενος ᾠχόμην ἔξω.

τὸ μετὰ [**349c**] ταῦτα ὁ μὲν ἐκυνήγει τὸν Ἡρακλείδην, Θεοδότης δὲ ἀγγέλους πέμπων Ἡρακλείδῃ φεύγειν διεκελεύετο. ὁ δὲ ἐκπέμψας Τισίαν καὶ πελταστὰς διώκειν ἐκέλευε· φθάνει δέ, ὡς ἐλέγετο, Ἡρακλείδης εἰς τὴν Καρχηδονίων ἐπικράτειαν ἐκφυγὼν ἡμέρας σμικρῷ τινὶ μέρει. τὸ δὴ μετὰ τοῦτο ἡ πάλαι ἐπιβουλὴ Διονυσίῳ τοῦ μὴ ἀποδοῦναι τὰ Δίωνος χρήματα ἔδοξεν ἔχθρας λόγον ἔχειν ἂν πρός με πιθανόν, καὶ πρῶτον μὲν ἐκ τῆς ἀκροπόλεως ἐκπέμπει με, εὑρὼν [**349d**] πρόφασιν ὡς τὰς γυναῖκας ἐν τῷ κήπῳ ἐν ᾧ κατῴκουν ἐγὼ δέοι θῦσαι θυσίαν τινὰ δεχήμερον· ἔξω δή με παρ' Ἀρχεδήμῳ προσέταττε τὸν χρόνον τοῦτον μεῖναι.

ὄντος δ' ἐμοῦ ἐκεῖ Θεοδότης μεταπεμψάμενός με πολλὰ περὶ τῶν τότε πραχθέντων ἠγανάκτει καὶ ἐμέμφετο Διονυσίῳ· ὁ δ' ἀκούσας ὅτι παρὰ Θεοδότην εἴην εἰσεληλυθώς, πρόφασιν [**349e**] αὖ ταύτην ἄλλην τῆς πρὸς ἐμὲ διαφορᾶς ποιούμενος, ἀδελφὴν τῆς πρόσθεν, πέμψας τινὰ ἠρώτα με εἰ ξυγγενοίμην ὄντως μεταπεμψαμένου με Θεοδότου. κἀγώ "παντάπασιν" ἔφην· ὁ δέ, "ἐκέλευε τοίνυν," ἔφη, "σοὶ φράζειν ὅτι καλῶς οὐδαμῆ ποιεῖς Δίωνα καὶ τοὺς Δίωνος φίλους ἀεὶ περὶ πλείονος αὐτοῦ ποιούμενος." ταῦτ' ἐρρήθη, καὶ οὐκέτι μετεπέμψατό με εἰς τὴν οἴκησιν πάλιν, ὡς ἤδη σαφῶς Θεοδότου μὲν ὄντος μου καὶ Ἡρακλείδου φίλου, αὐτοῦ δ' ἐχθροῦ, καὶ οὐκ εὐνοιεῖν ᾠετό με, ὅτι Δίωνι τὰ χρήματα ἔρρει παντελῶς.

When Dionysius heard this his temper flared and his face turned all sorts of colors, as happens when one gets angry. Theodotes then [**349b**] fell before him, took his hand, and began to weep and beg him to do nothing of the sort, but I drew him away and tried to reassure him: "don't worry, Theodotes," I said, "Dionysius would never dare to do anything contrary to the agreement we made yesterday." Then Dionysius, looking at me most tyrannically, said: "with you I never made any agreement either small or large." "By the gods you did," I said, "namely not to do precisely what this man is begging you not to!" And having said this, I turned around and left.

After [**349c**] this, Dionysius continued to try and hunt down Heracleides, while Theodotes was sending messengers to him urging him to flee. Dionysius then sent out Tisias and his peltasts with orders to pursue Heracleides, but Heracleides, as the story goes, escaped and beat them to the Carthaginians' territory by just a few hours. After this, Dionysius's old plot not to return any of Dion's property seems to have provided him plausible grounds for a feud with me, and at first he sent me away from the acropolis, proffering [**349d**] as an excuse that the women in the orchard in which I was living needed to perform some sort of ten-day-long sacrifice; so he ordered me to stay with Archedemus during this time. While I was there, Theodotes sent for me and made it clear that he was greatly displeased about what had happened and that he blamed Dionysius. And when Dionysius heard that I had gone to Theodotes, he made of this [**349e**] yet another pretext for a dispute with me, one related to the previous one, and he sent someone to ask me if I had really gone to meet Theodotes when he had sent for me. "Certainly," I said, to which the other responded: "well then, he ordered me to tell you that you are behaving quite badly by always holding Dion and Dion's friends in higher regard than him." This was the conversation, and he never invited me back to his residence again, since it was by now clear that I was a friend of Theodotes and Heracleides, and an enemy to him, and he believed that I was not pleased that Dion's assets had been definitively liquidated.

[**350a**] ᾤκουν δὴ τὸ μετὰ τοῦτο ἔξω τῆς ἀκροπόλεως ἐν τοῖς μισθοφόροις· προσιόντες δέ μοι ἄλλοι τε καὶ οἱ τῶν ὑπηρεσιῶν ὄντες Ἀθήνηθεν, ἐμοὶ πολῖται, ἀπήγγελλον ὅτι διαβεβλημένος εἴην ἐν τοῖς πελτασταῖς καί μοί τινες ἀπειλοῖεν, εἴ που λήψονταί με, διαφθερεῖν. μηχανῶμαι δή τινα τοιάνδε σωτηρίαν· πέμπω παρ' Ἀρχύτην καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους φίλους εἰς Τάραντα, φράζων ἐν οἷς ὢν τυγχάνω· οἱ δὲ πρόφασίν τινα πρεσβείας πορισάμενοι παρὰ τῆς πόλεως πέμπουσι [**350b**] τριακόντορόν τε καὶ Λαμίσκον αὐτῶν ἕνα, ὃς ἐλθὼν ἐδεῖτο Διονυσίου περὶ ἐμοῦ, λέγων ὅτι βουλοίμην ἀπιέναι, καὶ μηδαμῶς ἄλλως ποιεῖν. ὁ δὲ ξυνωμολόγησε καὶ ἀπέπεμψεν ἐφόδια δούς· τῶν Δίωνος δὲ χρημάτων οὔτ' ἐγώ τι ἀπῄτουν οὔτε τις ἀπέδωκεν.

ἐλθὼν δὲ εἰς Πελοπόννησον εἰς Ὀλυμπίαν, Δίωνα καταλαβὼν θεωροῦντα, ἤγγελλον τὰ γεγονότα. ὁ δὲ τὸν Δία ἐπιμαρτυράμενος εὐθὺς παρήγγελλεν ἐμοὶ καὶ τοῖς ἐμοῖς [**350c**] οἰκείοις καὶ φίλοις παρασκευάζεσθαι τιμωρεῖσθαι Διονύσιον, ἡμᾶς μὲν ξεναπατίας χάριν, οὕτω γὰρ ἔλεγέ τε καὶ ἐνόει, αὐτὸν δ' ἐκβολῆς ἀδίκου καὶ φυγῆς.

ἀκούσας δ' ἐγὼ τοὺς μὲν φίλους παρακαλεῖν ἐκέλευον, εἰ βούλοιντο· "ἐμὲ δ'," εἶπον ὅτι, "σὺ μετὰ τῶν ἄλλων βίᾳ τινὰ τρόπον σύσσιτον καὶ συνέστιον καὶ κοινωνὸν ἱερῶν Διονυσίῳ ἐποίησας, ὃς ἴσως ἡγεῖτο διαβαλλόντων πολλῶν ἐπιβουλεύειν ἐμὲ μετὰ σοῦ ἑαυτῷ καὶ τῇ τυραννίδι, καὶ ὅμως οὐκ ἀπέκτεινεν, [**350d**] ἠδέσθη δέ. οὔτ' οὖν ἡλικίαν ἔχω συμπολεμεῖν ἔτι σχεδὸν οὐδενί, κοινός τε ὑμῖν εἰμί, ἄν ποτέ τι πρὸς ἀλλήλους δεηθέντες φιλίας ἀγαθόν τι ποιεῖν βουληθῆτε· κακὰ δὲ ἕως ἂν ἐπιθυμῆτε, ἄλλους παρακαλεῖτε."

[**350a**] After all this I was living outside the acropolis among the mercenaries. Some men came to me, including some attendants who were from Athens – my fellow citizens – and they reported that I was being disparaged among the peltasts and that certain individuals were threatening to kill me if they ever got their hands on me. So I hatched the following plan to save myself: I sent word to Archytas and my other friends in Tarentum, explaining the situation I was in. They in turn fashioned some pretext for an embassy from their city and sent [**350b**] Lamiscus, one of their own, on a thirty-oared ship. When he arrived, he pleaded with Dionysius on my behalf, saying that I wished to leave and that he should not refuse. Dionysius agreed, and he sent me on my way after giving me supplies for the journey. About Dion's assets, however, I never asked, nor did anyone hand them over.

When I reached the Peloponnese at Olympia, I found Dion watching the games, and I reported what had happened. Calling Zeus as his witness, he immediately demanded that my friends [**350c**] and companions and I get ready to exact retribution from Dionysius, us because he had cheated his guests (this is what he said, and he believed it), and himself on account of his unjust banishment and exile.

When I heard this, I encouraged him to call on my friends, if they were willing. "As for me, however," I said that, "you, along with some others, coerced me into sharing my meals, a roof, and religious rites with Dionysius, who probably thought that I was plotting against him and his tyranny with you, as many people accused me of doing, and despite that he was merciful [**350d**] and did not kill me. Moreover, I am no longer of the age to join anyone in waging war, and I remain connected to you both, in case you should require each other's friendship and wish to do something good. But as long as your heart is set on destruction, call on others."

ταῦτα εἶπον μεμισηκὼς τὴν περὶ Σικελίαν πλάνην καὶ ἀτυχίαν. ἀπειθοῦντες δὲ καὶ οὐ πειθόμενοι ταῖς ὑπ' ἐμοῦ διαλλάξεσι πάντων τῶν νῦν γεγονότων κακῶν αὐτοὶ αἴτιοι ἐγένοντο αὑτοῖς, ὧν, εἰ Διονύσιος [**350e**] ἀπέδωκε τὰ χρήματα Δίωνι ἢ καὶ παντάπασι κατηλλάγη, οὐκ ἄν ποτε ἐγένετο οὐδέν, ὅσα γε δὴ τἀνθρώπινα· Δίωνα γὰρ ἐγὼ καὶ τῷ βούλεσθαι καὶ τῷ δύνασθαι κατεῖχον ἂν ῥᾳδίως· νῦν δὲ ὁρμήσαντες ἐπ' ἀλλήλους κακῶν πάντα ἐμπεπλήκασι.

[**351a**] καί τοι τήν γε αὐτὴν Δίων εἶχε βούλησιν ἥνπερ ἂν ἐγὼ φαίην δεῖν ἐμὲ καὶ ἄλλον, ὅστις μετρίως περί τε τῆς αὑτοῦ δυνάμεως καὶ φίλων καὶ περὶ πόλεως τῆς αὑτοῦ διανοοῖτ' ἂν εὐεργετῶν ἐν δυνάμει καὶ τιμαῖσι γενέσθαι τὰ μέγιστα ἐν ταῖς μεγίσταις. ἔστι δὲ οὐκ ἄν τις πλούσιον ἑαυτὸν ποιήσῃ καὶ ἑταίρους καὶ πόλιν ἐπιβουλεύσας καὶ ξυνωμότας συναγαγών, πένης ὢν καὶ ἑαυτοῦ μὴ κρατῶν, ὑπὸ δειλίας τῆς πρὸς τὰς ἡδονὰς ἡττημένος, [**351b**] εἶτα τοὺς τὰς οὐσίας κεκτημένους ἀποκτείνας, ἐχθροὺς καλῶν τούτους, διαφορᾷ τὰ τούτων χρήματα καὶ τοῖς συνεργοῖς τε καὶ ἑταίροις παρακελεύηται ὅπως μηδεὶς αὐτῷ ἐγκαλεῖ πένης φάσκων εἶναι· ταὐτὸν δὲ καὶ τὴν πόλιν ἂν οὕτω τις εὐεργετῶν τιμᾶται ὑπ' αὐτῆς, τοῖς πολλοῖς τὰ τῶν ὀλίγων ὑπὸ ψηφισμάτων διανέμων, ἢ μεγάλης προεστὼς πόλεως καὶ πολλῶν ἀρχούσης ἐλαττόνων τῇ ἑαυτοῦ πόλει τὰ τῶν σμικροτέρων [**351c**] χρήματα διανέμῃ μὴ κατὰ δίκην. οὕτω μὲν γὰρ οὔτε Δίων οὔτε ἄλλος ποτὲ οὐδεὶς ἐπὶ δύναμιν ἑκὼν εἶσιν ἀλιτηριώδη ἑαυτῷ τε καὶ γένει εἰς τὸν ἀεὶ χρόνον, ἐπὶ πολιτείαν δὲ καὶ νόμων κατασκευὴν τῶν δικαιοτάτων τε καὶ ἀρίστων, ὅ τι δι' ὀλιγίστων θανάτων καὶ φυγῶν γιγνομένην.

So I said, full of hatred for my Sicilian wandering and misfortune. They, however, did not listen, and by rejecting my attempts to reconcile them they are themselves to blame for their current problems, which never would have happened, as far one can tell with human affairs, if Dionysius [**350e**] had returned Dion's assets and simply come to terms with him. Indeed, between my desire and my capacity, I would have easily restrained Dion. But as it is, by pitting themselves against each other they have ruined everything.

[**351a**] And yet, with regard to his own power and with regard to his friends and city, Dion had the very same aspirations that I would say are necessary for me or for any other person who might have the reasonable goal of holding power and political office while conferring the greatest of benefits in the most important places. Conversely, no one enriches himself, his friends, and his city by plotting and putting together conspiracies, not if he himself is poor and unable to control himself, if in his cowardice he yields to his pleasures, [**351b**] or if he kills those who own property, calling them enemies, plundering their assets, and egging on his accomplices and companions to do the same so that no one may take issue with him by claiming to be poor. The same thing goes for anyone who is honored by the city by benefitting it in this way, by distributing to the many, by popular decree, the possessions of the few, or anyone who sits at the head of a great city that rules over many lesser ones and unfairly distributes the possessions [**351c**] of those smaller ones to his own city. As such, neither Dion nor anyone else will ever willingly strive for a power that would be a plague unto himself and his people for all eternity, but rather for the purpose of making a government and a body of laws that are the best and most just, created through the fewest possible exiles and executions.

ἃ νῦν δὴ Δίων πράττων, προτιμήσας τὸ πάσχειν ἀνόσια τοῦ δρᾶσαι πρότερον, διευλαβούμενος δὲ μὴ παθεῖν, ὅμως ἔπταισεν ἐπ' ἄκρον ἐλθὼν τοῦ περιγενέσθαι τῶν [**351d**] ἐχθρῶν, θαυμαστὸν παθὼν οὐδέν. ὅσιος γὰρ ἄνθρωπος ἀνοσίων πέρι, σώφρων τε καὶ ἔμφρων, τὸ μὲν ὅλον οὐκ ἄν ποτε διαψευσθείη τῆς ψυχῆς τῶν τοιούτων πέρι, κυβερνήτου δὲ ἀγαθοῦ πάθος ἂν ἴσως οὐ θαυμαστὸν εἰ πάθοι, ὃν χειμὼν μὲν ἐσόμενος οὐκ ἂν πάνυ λάθοι, χειμώνων δὲ ἐξαίσιον καὶ ἀπροσδόκητον μέγεθος λάθοι τ' ἂν καὶ λαθὸν κατακλύσειε βίᾳ. ταὐτὸν δὴ καὶ Δίωνα ἔσφηλε [δι' ὀλιγίστων]· κακοὶ μὲν γὰρ ὄντες αὐτὸν σφόδρα οὐκ ἔλαθον οἱ σφήλαντες, ὅσον δὲ ὕψος ἀμαθίας [**351e**] εἶχον καὶ τῆς ἄλλης μοχθηρίας τε καὶ λαιμαργίας, ἔλαθον, ᾧ δὴ σφαλεὶς κεῖται, Σικελίαν πένθει περιβαλὼν μυρίῳ.

[**352a**] τὰ δὴ μετὰ τὰ νῦν ῥηθέντα ἃ ξυμβουλεύω, σχεδὸν εἴρηταί τέ μοι καὶ εἰρήσθω· ὧν δ' ἐπανέλαβον ἕνεκα τὴν εἰς Σικελίαν ἄφιξιν τὴν δευτέραν, ἀναγκαῖον εἶναι ἔδοξέ μοι ῥηθῆναι δεῖν διὰ τὴν ἀτοπίαν καὶ ἀλογίαν τῶν λεγομένων. εἰ δ' ἄρα τινὶ τὰ νῦν ῥηθέντα εὐλογώτερα ἐφάνη καὶ προφάσεις πρὸς τὰ γενόμενα ἱκανὰς ἔχειν ἔδοξέ τῳ, μετρίως ἂν ἡμῖν καὶ ἱκανῶς εἴη τὰ νῦν εἰρημένα.

To be sure, Dion was doing just that, preferring to endure unholy acts rather than commit them, though still wary of suffering them, and all the same he was tripped up just as he came to the very point of overcoming his [**351d**] enemies; yet what he suffered was not at all incredible. Indeed, a conscientious, wise, and prudent man who is surrounded by deviants can never completely deceive his soul about such people, but it should come as no surprise if he suffers the same fate as that good helmsman who would certainly not be ignorant of an oncoming storm, but who might be caught off guard by its extraordinary and unexpected magnitude, and swept away by its violence. Dion too was brought down in this way. For he was not ignorant of the fact that the men who brought him down were very wicked indeed, but he did not realize [**351e**] the depths of their ignorance and general depravity and greed, for which he lies defeated, girding Sicily with boundless grief.

[**352a**] After everything I have just told you, my advice to you has essentially been given, and should suffice. Because of the absurd and unreasonable nature of the reports, it seemed necessary for me to repeat the reasons that I came to Sicily a second time. And if anyone thinks that what I have said just now is somewhat reasonable and provides an adequate explanation of what happened, then I have spoken enough, and with due measure.